



SPORT

Favourites fall in the Cup



COMMENT

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NETWORK

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Wrongly hanged: Hanratty is found innocent

EXCLUSIVE by Jason Bennetto, Crime Correspondent

James Hanratty, hanged for one of the most notorious crimes this century, is set to be cleared 35 years after his execution for the A6 murder.

Hanratty, 25, was convicted of brutally killing a married man before he raped the victim's lover and repeatedly shot her leaving her paralysed for life.

Home Office officials are understood to have concluded that Hanratty was innocent. This follows an unpublished police inquiry which concluded last year that he was a victim of a miscarriage of justice and that the murder was probably part of a wider conspiracy.

Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, is expected to announce within the next few weeks that he is to refer the case to the Court of Appeal, where the conviction is expected to be quashed.

The reappraisal of the case follows more than three decades of campaigning by members of Hanratty's family and his supporters. Many of the campaigners believe the real killer was Peter Alphon, who is alleged to have admitted to the crime on numerous occasions. There are also a string of evidence that links Mr Alphon to the murder.

However, Mr Alphon, 66, speaking from his home in London, told the Independent that he was innocent.

Hanratty, a petty burglar, was convicted of abducting Michael Gregsten, 36, and his mistress Valerie Storie, 22, at gunpoint from a cornfield at Taplow, near Maidenhead, in Berkshire, in August 1961. The lovers were forced to drive about 60 miles to a lay-by on the A6 near Bedford, known as Deadman's Hill.

At the end of the two-hour trip Mr Gregsten, a research scientist was shot dead. Miss Storie was then sexually assaulted and before being shot repeatedly at close range.

Hanratty was arrested in Blackpool two months later, on 9 October. Reports at the time said this followed the "amazing" identification of Hanratty by Janet Gregsten, the wife of the dead man, who saw him on a London street and her "intuition" told her he was the killer even though at that stage he was not a suspect.

He was convicted largely on the identification evidence of Miss Storie, despite her only seeing her assailant for a few seconds and only identifying Hanratty in a second line up. She later admitted that

her memory of the attacker was fading.

On the morning of his execution at Bedford jail Hanratty wrote to his family, insisting he was innocent and asking them to clear his name. His brother, Michael Hanratty, 58, who has fought for the past three decades for the case to be taken to the Court of Appeal, said: "The day before Jimmy was hanged he said: 'I'm dying tomorrow but I'm innocent. Clear my name.' This is what we need to be able to do."

At first the campaign was headed by Hanratty's father, also named James, who toured Britain showing a film in an effort to clear his son's name. He handed out leaflets to the public outside the House of Commons proclaiming his son's innocence.

But any pardon will come too late for Mr Hanratty's father, who died 20 years ago. The campaign was taken up by Hanratty's mother Mary, who is now suffering from Alzheimer's disease, along with Michael, and his other brothers, Peter and Richard.

Other campaigners included two lawyers, John Justice and Jeremy Fox, who became convinced of Hanratty's innocence. Four books and a number of television programmes, including two by Yorkshire TV, have also been instrumental in having the case reopened.

In the 1992 programme, "Hanratty: Mystery of Dead Man's Hill", a documentary for Yorkshire TV, the film-maker Bob Wolfenden called for DNA tests to be carried out to establish the true identity of the murderer.

These were eventually carried out at the beginning of 1995, by comparing semen found at the scene of the crime with DNA from Hanratty's exhumed body. But unfortunately the DNA retrieved was not of good enough quality to obtain a result. The campaign has gone on ever since.

One of the most implausible aspects of the case was the acceptance that Hanratty, a city dweller, should by chance come across the couple in a cornfield and carry out a random killing.

It emerged after his execution that Hanratty also had a good alibi. Fourteen witnesses came forward to back up his claim that he was in Ryel, North Wales - 250 miles from the scene of the crime.

In his interview with the Independent,



The 35-year fight for justice

22 August 1961: Michael Gregsten murdered and Valerie Storie assaulted and shot

17 February 1962: James Hanratty tried at Bedford Crown Court and convicted of murder

4 April 1962: Hanratty hanged

1967: Peter Alphon "confesses" to killing in Paris, but later denies it

1971: Paul Foot's book *Who Killed Hanratty?* published

1992: Television programme *Hanratty: Mystery of Dead Man's Hill* broadcast

1995: Inconclusive DNA tests of Hanratty carried out

1996: Police inquiry concludes Hanratty was innocent

SUNDAY PICTORIAL

HANRATTY JURY TAKE 9½ HOURS

By Bill Hamilton and Bill Duncan
THE murder trial of the century ended dramatically at 9.15 last night when James Hanratty was found guilty of the murder of Michael Gregsten. He was sentenced to death.

Women at the back of the court at Bedford Assizes were told when the eleven-man jury returned their verdict in the case of the A6 killing.

Hanratty, wearing a white shirt and dark tie, was seen in the dock as the jury returned their verdict.

The jury had deliberated for 9½ hours, the longest time in the history of the Assizes.

Mr Alphon, who had been charged with the murder, was not present at the trial.

The trial was held at Bedford Assizes, which opened on Monday morning.

The judge, Mr Justice Goff, told the jury that the evidence was overwhelming.

He said: "The evidence is so clear that you can only reach one conclusion."

The jury returned their verdict at 9.15 pm, after a long day of hearing.

James Hanratty was found guilty of the murder of Michael Gregsten.

He was sentenced to death by hanging.

The trial was a landmark case in the history of the Assizes.

It was the first time a man has been found guilty of the murder of a woman.

The case has attracted widespread media attention.

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JAMES HANRATTY - the A6 killer - first picture

Before his execution, Hanratty wrote to his family insisting he was innocent: 'I'm dying tomorrow. Clear my name'

Reading standards at new low

Anthony Bevins and Lucy Ward

Appallingly low standards of reading in primary schools across Britain are identified in a new report, published as the Cabinet meets today to consider its election manifesto - with education reportedly at the top of the agenda.

The independent survey of National Curriculum test results for 600,000 7-year-olds suggests there is a "major crisis" in the teaching of English and mathematics. The survey, carried out for the right-wing Social Market Foundation, examined unpublished Government data on test results for reading, spelling and mathematics. It concluded that the findings of failure, between and within local education authorities, amounted to "a major indictment of what has passed for 'good primary practice' over the last two decades."

And while the Conservatives habitually blame Labour-controlled local education authorities for the education crisis, the survey shows that Conservative-controlled Westminster fell below the national average grade for 7-year-old reading and spelling results.

One proposal up for discussion at Chequers today is the creation of "super-schools", allowing good schools to expand to meet the demand of parents wanting the best for their children. Margaret Thatcher's 1987 election manifesto said schools should be allowed to expand to their "agreed physical capacity". Popular schools, which have earned parent support by offering good education, will then be able to expand beyond present pupil numbers.

Under the heading "Opportunity for All" - the present campaign theme - John Major promised in his 1992 manifesto: "Popular schools which



are oversubscribed will be given the resources to expand." However, five years later, a decade on from Baroness Thatcher's pledge and after 18 years of Conservative Government, a recent Audit Commission report found that popular schools were still unable to grow to match demand, and

parental appeals had risen by 44 per cent over three years. Today's Social Market Foundation report said that while Ofsted had recently found 79 per cent of pupils in three London local education authorities were below average in reading, that was by no means unusual.

The results for reading given in this paper for these three LEAs are very low," it said. "But they are very similar to those for about another 20 LEAs... together with the primary schools in other great conurbations such as Birmingham, Bradford, Manchester and Sheffield. Even within the best authority, Richmond-upon-Thames, there is a reading age gap of almost two years between the best and worst schools in the borough. A similar 'crisis' is identified for mathematics."

Today's Chequers meeting will also be faced with policy proposals on law and order, employment, and health, but there

is a strong requirement to meet and match Tony Blair's pledge to step up the political pace on education. One plan is to offer all state schools the same independence at present granted to church schools, giving schools under town hall control the chance of greater freedom to run their own affairs.

The Labour education spokesman, David Blunkett, said yesterday: "It is quite clear that the Conservatives have absolutely no ideas of their own on raising standards in schools, developing new local partnerships, or improving the professionalism of teachers."

Leading article, page 13

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| QUICKLY | |
|--|-------|
| Newcastle out of Cup | 18.19 |
| Newcastle United went out of the FA Cup yesterday after losing 2-1 at home to Nottingham Forest. In the other big cup match of the day, Chelsea went through to the fifth round after coming back from 0-2 down to defeat Liverpool 4-2. Sport tabloid | |
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news

Royal yacht taxes Labour minds

Anthony Bevis
Political Editor

After twelve hours of complete confusion, Labour yesterday reaffirmed that it would not be spending any taxpayers' money on the replacement for the Royal Yacht, *Britannia*.

But last night a spokesman for Tony Blair's office said: "We are not ruling out for ever spending a penny on the royal yacht. We are not saying never ever a penny."

Nothing could have been clearer than the guidance offered on Saturday, that Shadow Chancellor Gordon Brown

had sent a message to the Queen, letting it be known that Labour would not honour last week's Tory pledge to pay for a new £60m yacht.

For good measure, and to firm up the non-attributable briefing given by Mr Brown's office, defence spokesman John Reid went on BBC television on Saturday night to add: "We are saying that we will not fund, out of public expenditure, £60m on a royal yacht when there are demands like health and education."

But there was a more equivocal line from Tony Blair's office, with one source suggesting

that no one had said there would be no government money at all for the royal yacht.

Yesterday morning, Alistair Darling, shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury and Labour's spending axeman, went on BBC television's *Breakfast with Frost* to give the definitive Labour view - a reflection of the leader's line.

Frost's question was clear enough: "You have in this case, according to the stories, specifically decided that the royal yacht should not be part of your spending?" Mr Darling replied: "No, what... what we have said

Frost interrupted: "You haven't. Oh, it's not..." Mr Darling continued, saying that the yacht had to be considered alongside other projects in education and the health service, but he did not rule out government spending.

That prompted Frost to ask: "So contrary though, Alistair, to the leaks yesterday to the papers, this decision has not been made and there may be taxpayers' money under Labour spent on *Britannia*?"

In spite of his frontbench colleague's appearance on BBC television news the night before, Mr Darling said: "Well, I do

wish these people who write these stories would actually come and ask, rather than rely on leaks and so on."

Mr Darling later apologised for any confusion, indicating that there would indeed be no taxpayers' money for a royal yacht under Labour.

He said there was no money set aside for a royal yacht in Labour's spending plans for its first two years in office and, after that, it would have to take its chances against other, competing claims in health and education.

However, Labour would also be looking at other means of financing the replacement; a clear hint that private finance would be sought.

"I'm normally as clear as day," Mr Darling told *The Independent*. "I'm sorry if there was any confusion."

Last night, the line was that there was no budget for a royal yacht in Labour's first two-year spending plans. After that, the project would have to compete with education and health and, therefore, private finance would be sought.

But that did not mean that no taxpayers' money would be spent by a Labour Government on a royal yacht.

significant shorts

Car bomb injures soldier in Northern Ireland

A soldier was recovering yesterday after being slightly injured when a car bomb exploded in Northern Ireland. The injured man was one of three off-duty soldiers checking their vehicle in the Lisburn Street car park, in Ballynahinch, Co Down, when the device went off. A Royal Ulster Constabulary spokesman said the victim was treated at hospital for minor injuries and was later released.

No organisation has claimed responsibility for the bomb, which exploded at 1.30am.

Superintendent Ronnie Hawthorn, an RUC sub-divisional commander, said: "As a response of the increased terrorist threat and increased terrorist activity, as was witnessed at Ballydugan last weekend, there is a heightened degree of security and vigilance." He added that it was a miracle no one had been killed in the blast.

Five men were arrested in the early hours yesterday after security forces spotted suspicious activity in Main Street, Dungiven, Co Londonderry. A police spokesman said an improvised grenade and a rifle were recovered as part of the operation.

Baby-milk officials under fire

The Department of Health is to review its handling of health scares after criticism from health visitors over delays in dealing with the salmonella outbreak linked to baby-milk powder, a spokeswoman said yesterday.

The Community Practitioners and Health Visitors Association is to write to the Government to voice concerns over what it believes was a two-day delay in consulting health professionals. More than 10,000 worried mothers have called telephone hotlines for advice after a possible link between an outbreak of salmonella affecting 12 children and the product Milumil was announced. All packs of Milumil were withdrawn from sale while further tests were carried out.

A Department of Health spokeswoman said: "We made every effort to get information to the public as quickly and efficiently as possible, but we can always learn from experience."

Meningitis kills US student

An American has died of meningitis just 10 days after he began a three-year degree course at a Scottish university. Brian Bainbridge, 27, a physiotherapy student at Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen, died of meningococcal septicaemia on Saturday, two hours after being taken to hospital from halls of residence at Woolmanhill.

Mr Bainbridge, from Maryland, arrived in Scotland 10 days ago with a group of 21 American students - all of whom have been given antibiotics. Other students at Woolmanhill have been advised that only people in close contact with Mr Bainbridge needed medication. A spokesman at the university described his death as "a tragedy".

Activists burn poultry lorries

Animal rights activists yesterday claimed responsibility for a fire which left seven lorries loaded with frozen poultry badly damaged. A spokesman for the Animal Liberation Front said incendiary devices had been placed beneath lorries at Buxted Fresh Quality Poultry at Brackley, Northamptonshire, on Saturday night. No one was hurt in the fires which caused thousands of pounds worth of damage.

Coach driver black-out

A driver who blacked out at the wheel of a National Express coach yesterday while travelling at 60 mph on the M42 is to be questioned about the incident, police said.

The hostess on the coach, Tina McCall, had to steer the vehicle to safety after the driver Mark Davies, 30, lost consciousness near Solihull, West Midlands.

The coach was badly damaged - but Ms McCall, 40, and the 30 passengers were unhurt. Mr Davies was treated in hospital for a minor head injury. Police said there is no suggestion that drink or drugs were involved.

All winners together at Camelot

Big winners on the National Lottery may be given their own club so they can get together to discuss the impact of their new-found fortunes on their lives, Camelot confirmed yesterday. The club would be open to around 300 millionaires and 2,000 players who have won more than about £150,000, but details of the membership list would of course remain a closely guarded secret.

Striking a note for the birds

The desperate plight of Britain's disappearing songbirds is to be raised in Parliament today by Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow.

Some of the best-loved species, he warned yesterday, which were common a few years ago, are facing decimation unless urgent action is taken to protect them.

18 feet below, the word from Big Momma is: No surrender

Jojo Moyes

Five "human mole" protesters barricaded in a tunnel deep below a road camp in Devon are threatening to remain underground for a month after their surrender terms were rejected yesterday.

The protesters, who are in a maze of tunnels 18 feet underground, said they wanted construction to stop until an "unbiased and open" public inquiry was held into the new A30 project including its design, building, and financial and operating systems. They also called for relevant documents to be open to public scrutiny, with financial details of the road to be revealed to the inquiry.

But the under-sheriff of Devon, Trevor Coleman, leading the eviction of the Fairmile camp on the route of the A30 near Exeter, said their proposals were "totally unacceptable". "They are unrealistic and I could not deliver on them anyway because I do not have the power to do so. I cannot negotiate," he said.

Speaking from below ground by citizens' band radio link, protester John Woodhams said that if their demands were not met "we will just hang in here as long as we possibly can in the hope he [Mr Coleman] will change his mind and save a lot of time and money".

The only female underground protester, known as Animal, warned that they would ultimately lock themselves on to secure underground points and added: "We have got food and

water to last almost indefinitely."

The Fairmile eviction is the third and last involving camps built over the last two and a half years in the path of the £65m, 13-mile road scheme between Exeter and Honiton.

Stephen Langley, a surgeon at Southampton Hospital who yesterday descended the length of the protest tunnel so far cleared, said the protesters "appear to be very well with plenty of food and water. They could be down there for about a month, they have got enough supplies for that long". He added: "I would not like to be down there. It is cold and confined and the soil is very wet."

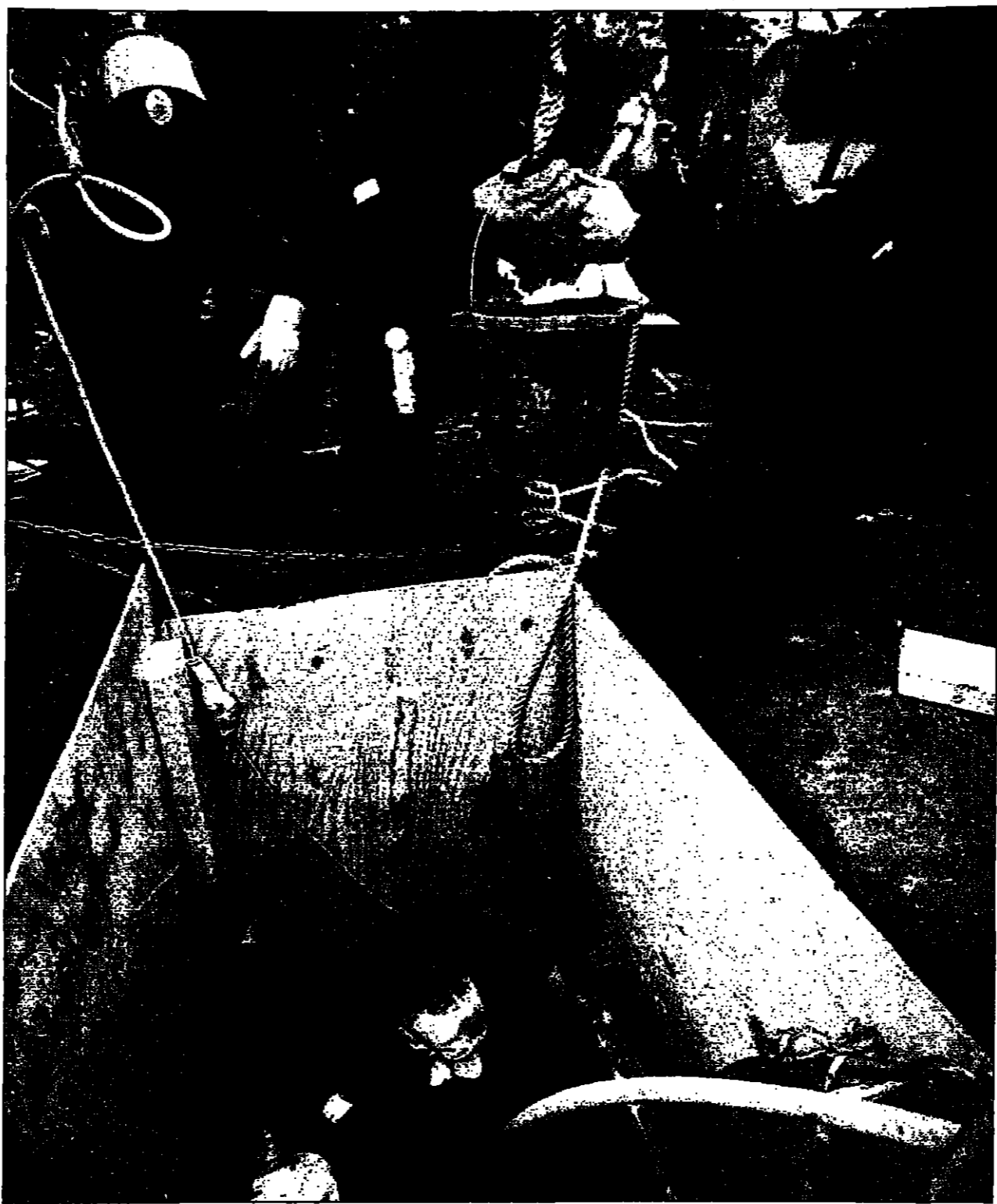
Early yesterday, tunnelling specialists cut their way through a six-inch-thick steel-plated door leading into the protesters' tunnel, which is called Big Momma.

Mr Coleman said the tunnelers faced arrest when they finally came out. "They are obstructing me, I have been down the shaft and read them a specific warning relating to tunnelling obstruction and the cost."

But he added that it was "anyone's guess" how long it would take to get them out. "We still do not know the extent of the tunnel," he said.

Earlier the protesters' communications van, which had a direct link to the tunnelers, was moved off site by police order. The protesters set up another link, but that closed down shortly after their news conference.

Mr Coleman said alternative communications had been set up by the police and the underground specialists, but they



Dug in: The eviction team trying to get access to the protesters' tunnel at Fairmile, Devon. Photograph: Richard Lappas

had been rejected by the protesters. Talks with the under-sheriff, Mark Clark, said it was believed behind that there was an 18ft vertical shaft

and a "maze of offshoots". Meanwhile, work was continuing to remove three remaining protesters from trees on the site. A police cordon around the

camp had been extended because other protesters were said to be coming to the area from Newbury and elsewhere, Mr Coleman said.

Clergy forget Commandments

Ian Burrell

Almost two-thirds of Church of England vicars cannot remember all Ten Commandments according to the results of a random poll.

Some of the 200 clergy questioned could name only two - "Thou shalt not commit adultery" and "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife".

The results of the poll provoked anger among traditionalists, including Conservative MP John Redwood, who has called for stronger moral leadership from the church. He said: "It's their job to remind us of the laws of Christianity. The commandments are central to the faith and I am amazed that so few could recall them."

One vicar, the Rev Geoffrey

Shillock, of Wolverley, Worcestershire, who could not remember all the commandments, said: "The trouble is that they are very negative. Most people prefer a more positive approach."

Lord Coggan, 87, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, defended the clergy. "They were just caught on the hop that's all."

A Church of England spokesman said: "When people are put

of course they know they are very important indeed. [The commandments] provide a framework for life. Within the perimeters of these commandments you have a healthy society. Step outside them and you have a recipe for disaster."

The poll, conducted for *The Sunday Times*, also found that many vicars do not believe in fundamental aspects of traditional Christian faith. Thirty one per cent of those questioned did not believe in the Virgin Birth; 12 per cent did not expect a Second Coming; and 5 per cent did not believe Jesus performed miracles.

Asked which politician offered the best Christian leadership, 49 per cent said Tony Blair, 9 per cent Paddy Ashdown and 7 per cent John Major.

on the spot like this, of course they can't remember. Given time they would recall them."

However, Canon Peter Goodridge, from Truro, Cornwall, said it was right they were forgotten. "They were right for a community from a different time living a nomadic life."

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Former ministers share £500,000 'goodbye' cash

More than 70 Tory former ministers who have resigned or been sacked since the 1992 general election have shared £467,000 in tax-free "golden goodbyes", Labour claimed yesterday.

John Redwood, who resigned as Secretary of State for Wales to fight John Major for the Tory party leadership on a platform of backing spending cuts, collected £8,658 as his severance payment. Former Chancellor Norman Lamont, another supporter of public-spending cuts, also received more than £8,000, according to Labour's dossier.

Ian McCartney, Labour's employment spokesman, said he obtained the severance payment figures after research by the House of Commons Library. He contrasted these pay-

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Ban urged on holiday drug after girl dies

Glenda Cooper

A six-year-old girl has died after using a controversial anti-malarial drug used by thousands of British people every year who travel to areas where the disease is rife. It is the first documented death linked to melloquine, which is known to cause serious side effects in some people.

hances such as panic attacks, depression and hallucinations. Suicide attempts have also been blamed on the use of Lariam.

Last year a Bristol-based law firm announced that it was to seek compensation for people who suffered serious side effects after taking Lariam. To date, Lawrence Tuckett has been contacted by around 500 prospective litigants.

In August, the *British Medical Journal* reported that the incidence of side effects was as high as one in 140 travellers who

were taking melloquine, and unpleasant enough to temporarily stop their day-to-day activities. This compares with a figure of one in 1100 of those taking other anti-malarials chloroquine and proguanil. Because of increasing resistance, these drugs are less effective than before.

Lance Cole, of the pressure group Lariam Action, which has 300 members, called for immediate suspension of the drug saying: "This is the first attributable death we know about. It

is further proof there is a problem with the drug."

In the case reported in the *Lancet* by doctors at the Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle, a six-year-old healthy girl was given Lariam for going to Nigeria on a four-week holiday. She had not taken the drug before and was not on any other medication.

Five weeks after starting the course, she developed blisters on her lips and a swollen face. Her skin erupted, parts of her body became ulcerated and she

shed both hair and nails. She developed fever, anaemia and septicemia (blood poisoning). After being admitted to a paediatric intensive care unit she suffered heart problems and died after 19 days.

Writing in the *Lancet*, Professor Clifford Lawrence of the Department of Dermatology and Plastic Surgery said: "We believe that this case of fatal toxic epidermal necrolysis in a previously fit and healthy six-year-old was due to melloquine. Extensive investigations

revealed no evidence of an alternative drug or other causes."

The doctors said that the increase of chloroquine-resistant malaria, and easier travel to places where malaria is endemic meant that the need for effective and safe treatment was "self-evident."

But: "We are concerned that anti-malarials such as fansidar and melloquine, with long half-lives, may produce severe and potentially life-threatening adverse reactions which persist long after the drug is with-

drawn... we emphasise the importance of careful reporting of side effects if further deaths are to be prevented."

A spokeswoman for Roche Products Limited UK, which manufactures Lariam, said: "This is a very sad case. What Roche would wish to underline, however, is that the symptom is not unique to Lariam, that it is extremely rare and that the risks of not taking appropriate prophylaxis for malaria are far higher."

"The symptom described is

one that has been reported in association with anti-malarial drugs including melloquine. A warning about the symptom is included on the Lariam data sheet produced by the company."

But Mr Cole said we call for a suspension of the drug: "Malaria is a dangerous disease and people must take precautions against it but what is the point of taking an anti-malarial drug no matter how effective it is if it makes you feel worse than the actual disease?"

Hail to thee blithe spirit

(But not if you live in Middle England)



Poetic licence: Percy Bysshe Shelley by Amelia Curren (1919) in the National Portrait Gallery, and the poet's memorial in Horsham which has caused local uproar

Photograph: Andrew Haddon

Jojo Moyes

Nearly 200 years after his death, the controversial poet Percy Bysshe Shelley has again managed to divide his home town of Horsham in Sussex. He has done this not as a result of his revolutionary, anti-monarchist, vegetarian views - but through the sculpture installed to commemorate him.

Unveiled in a blaze of glory last November, *Universe Rising* is a huge, mechanised globe designed by the award-winning sculptor Angela Conner and paid for by Sainsbury's, the supermarket chain.

The moving sculpture stretches across 45 feet and stands 28 feet high. Six and a half tons of water run down it, while smaller "satellite globes" float in pools of water. At the opening ceremony, the mayor of Leningrad, in Italy, where Shelley died, described the memorial, after some thought, as "very brave".

The sculpture's aim, according to Horsham District Council, was to provide a focus for the town centre that was challenging and controversial "like the poet himself". In this, it has

exceeded their hopes. While a piece of radical sculpture might not be expected to please everyone in a conservative home-counties town, the design has elicited criticism bordering on the hysterical.

Inhabitants have bombarded the local *West Sussex County Times* with letters calling for the sculpture's removal, describing it as "an abomination", an "eyesore", "irrelevant, incongruous, incoherent and indulgent", and, less flamboyantly, "an oversized pastie".

The newspaper itself commented: "Its appearance and quality as a public work of art has attracted widespread derision and distress. Just how long it will survive is the burning question of the moment."

The detractors are not just complaining about the design. The £140,000 sculpture has not worked properly since it was unveiled and parts of it are to be removed this week so that alterations can take place. Horsham District Council has commissioned an independent report on the sculpture's mechanical

engineering before assuming responsibility for it.

The fountain has splashed so much water over the square that one councillor suggested the area be turned into a skating rink. One local man is taking legal advice after he fractured his skull and dislocated his shoulder after coming off his bike on ice nearby.

Vandals, however, find the work of art particularly attractive - not surprising, say locals, when you situate a piece of moving modern art between a pub and a McDonald's restaurant.

Sainsbury's plc, generally a keen supporter of modern art, appeared to be distancing itself from *Rising Universe* last week and was keen to point out that while it financed the sculpture, the company had had "very little say" in what that sculpture was.

A spokeswoman said she could not say Sainsbury's was "unequivocally pleased" with the end result. "Art and architecture are very subjective and on this Sainsbury's would say beauty is in the eye of the beholder," she said.

But the sculpture has its defenders. The Horsham Society, like the Fountain

Society, described the sculpture as "magnificent". The next time planners ask themselves if something is too modern, said spokesman John Buchanan, they should think back to the sculpture's opening ceremony.

"I certainly haven't seen a bigger crowd since John George Haigh, the acid-bath murderer, appeared at the Town Hall magistrates' court in 1949," he said.

Martin Pearson, the Horsham District Council's chief executive, is bullish

about the sculpture's future, blaming many of the problems on the cold weather. He said his staff are instructed to be relaxed "if it takes until March" to be straightened out, and said the mechanical report was simply a formality.

But resident and local reporter Martine James, who has followed the fountain saga since its inception, says nothing has exercised Horsham as fiercely since the council introduced wheelie bins - and the row shows no

signs of abating. "There seems to be no middle ground on this at all. But people who come in from outside the area to look at it tend to love it," she said. "It certainly promotes debate, and that's what modern art is supposed to do."

She has added to the controversy with the revelation that Cambridge City Council rejected a similar "golden globe" sculpture by Ms Conner in 1995 after public protest. She has also recorded similarities between

the design and drawings from a 17th-century book, after "someone came into reception to point them out".

Meanwhile, a curious side-effect of the debate is that the local paper has been deluged with poetry about sculpture. The fountain's future may be uncertain, Ms James said, but it had certainly proved an apt memorial.

"Shelley was such a controversial figure," Ms James said. "This just follows in his footsteps."

Revolutionary lines from Shelley England in 1819

An old, mad, blind, despised, and dying king - Princes, the drags of their dull race, who flow through public scorn - mud from a muddy spring - Rulers who neither see, nor feel, nor know, But leech-like to their fainting country cling, Till they drop, blind in blood, without a blow - A people starved and stabbed in the untilled field - An army, which liberticide and prey Makes as a two-edged sword to all who wield - Golden and sanguine laws which tempt and slay; Religion Christless, Godless - a book sealed; A Senate - Time's worst statute unenpaled; - Are graves, from which a glorious Phantom may Burst, to illumine our tempestuous day.

Gorgeous helps stop greyhound racing from going to the dogs

Patrick Toohar

An ordinary greyhound adopted by a new television game show for lottery losers is set to become Britain's most famous dog after unexpectedly romping home at generous odds in front of millions of armchair fans.

Gorgeous, a previously unknown two-year-old black and white bitch, is the star turn in a Channel 4 series called *Last Chance Lottery* aimed at the vast majority of punters who end up out of pocket every week on the National Lottery.

In its first programme on Saturday night, shown an hour after the main lottery draw, the bulk of the show's £500 "jackpot" was put on the dog at 7-1 in the 9.30 at Harlow.

Overcoming a slow start from trap four, Gorgeous defied the long odds and turned the form book upside down by winning the race by several lengths. The win, only her fourth, was worth a mere £250 in prize money but it netted the *Last Chance*



Star of the show: Gorgeous the greyhound - 7-1 winner

Lottery show a tax-free £2,160. Her victory was greeted with incredulity by the show's host, comedian Patrick Kielty, and those connected with Gorgeous.

"Nobody expected her to win," said Jenni Marsh, the dog's owner. "She certainly didn't have a very good preparation, what with going up and down to the television studios for several days before the race. But on the night she felt right.

She likes being a film star." Indeed, Gorgeous is likely to remain in the limelight for some time to come because the game show plans to chart her progress over the next nine Saturdays at different tracks.

"It is a truly innovative piece of TV and greyhound racing has done well to secure some precious prime-time exposure," said Bob Betts writing in *The Sporting Life*, the punter's bible.

It is exposure the industry desperately needs. Once a regular feature in the 1970s on ITV's *World of Sport*, greyhound racing is now lucky to get any air time on the main channels.

The impact of the lottery has heightened the industry's plight, leading to falling attendances and dwindling turnover at dog tracks up and down the country and forcing some to close.

And another blow could be delivered on Wednesday week when Camelot, the National Lottery organiser, launches a televised midweek draw with a guaranteed £10m jackpot.

In the short term, Gorgeous could prove the surprise package that comes to greyhound racing's rescue. But punters hoping to scoop a lottery-style windfall on her next outing are likely to be disappointed.

"One thing is for sure," said Mike Dillon of Ladbrokes, Britain's biggest bookmaker. "Gorgeous will not be 7-1 next week. The world and his wife will want to be on her."



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news



Jack Straw

Age 50, Labour, shadow home secretary, NUS president 1969-71. When he was elected it was considered a major breakthrough for the radical student left. Became MP for Blackburn in 1979. Defending a majority of 7,027, he is now better known as a hardliner on law and order.



Stephen Twigg

Age 30, Labour, NUS president 1990-92. Full-time official of the Fabian Society and openly gay candidate standing against Michael Portillo, the defence secretary, in Enfield Southgate. A local boy made good, the Oxford University graduate must overturn a 16,000 majority.



Phil Woolas

Age 37, Labour, NUS president 1984-86. As a student politician he led the battle against then education secretary Keith Joseph's fight to impose tuition fees. Works as head of communications for the GMB trade union. He is fighting a three-way marginal in the new seat of Oldham East and Saddleworth.



Lorna Fitzsimons

Age 29, Labour, NUS president 1992-94. Her greatest moment was her fight with John Patten, then education secretary, over the Education Bill in 1994, when the union was in danger of being closed down. A political lobbyist, she is standing in her home town of Rochdale, a Lib Dem marginal.

Student firebrands come of age

Ian Burrell

The race is on to become the first student leader to take a seat in parliament since Jack Straw, the shadow home secretary, 18 years ago.

Five former NUS presidents are running for election for Labour. The increase in the parliamentary aspirations of NUS presidents is seen as a result of Labour taking control of student politics after throwing off the far left in the early 1980s. One candidate said they were now "coming of age".

Yet while Labour continues

to dominate student politics, it is a former Tory student leader who probably stands the best chance of being elected.

John Berrow, 34, is defending a 19,791 majority in Buckingham. He has risen through the Tory ranks after being chairman of the Federation of Conservative Students in its traumatic final years when, beset by feuding, it was dissolved and abolished by the then party chairman Lord Tebbit.

He has maintained contact with most of his Labour student adversaries who he regards as life-long political enemies.

"It is very possible to have civilised debates with these people but I don't expect to convert them," he said. "You have to confront and defeat them. It's a war of attrition."

Of the former presidents, Lorna Fitzsimons is in the best position to follow Mr Straw into Westminster. Contesting a seat in her home town of Rochdale, she has been helped by boundary changes which have cut the Liberal Democrat majority to a couple of hundred.

Ms Fitzsimons, 29, NUS president from 1992-94, is a Blairite now working as a lobbyist

in order to gain a better understanding of the private sector. She said the NUS leaders standing for parliament shared a common heritage. "We are Kinnock babies," she said. "None of us are right-wing but we are all modernisers."

She said that while past NUS presidents sought to influence society through law, journalism or pressure groups, there was now a consensus that change could best be brought about through parliament.

Fighting a much tougher seat, is Stephen Twigg, NUS president from 1990-92, an

openly gay candidate, standing against Michael Portillo, the Secretary of State for Defence secretary, in Enfield Southgate. An Enfield boy, he will need more than local knowledge to overturn a 16,000 majority.

Mr Twigg believes Labour is enjoying the fruits of the shake-up in left-wing student politics in 1980 and 1981, until when extreme-left students had dominated the national union. Then Labour decided to break from the Broad Left alliance and since 1982 a succession of Labour candidates has been elected to the NUS presidency.

"What we are seeing is a coming of age of those Labour presidents of the NUS," he said.

Mr Twigg, 30, said the former student leaders could bring a vital injection of youth into Westminster. "There is such a problem with young people's disenchantment with politics and particularly party politics."

Mr Straw entered parliament in 1979. Few other Labour MPs have since cut their political teeth in student politics but that is set to change.

Charles Clarke, 46, who preceded the new wave of Labour

NUS presidents, holding the title from 1975-77, is standing for parliament for the first time in Norwich South, where he defends a Labour majority of 6,181.

Jim Murphy, NUS president 1994-96, faces a more difficult challenge, overcoming a Tory majority of 11,688 in the Scottish constituency of Eastwood.

But Phil Woolas, 37, president of the NUS from 1984-86 and now head of communications for the GMB trade union, is fighting a three-way marginal in the new constituency of Oldham East and Saddleworth.

In student politics Mr Woolas distinguished himself by leading the fight against the fight of the Secretary of State for Education, Keith Joseph, to impose tuition fees on students.

For the Liberal Democrats, Lembit Opik, former president of Bristol University and member of the NUS national executive, is their best hope of a student leader turning MP.

Mr Opik is defending a 5,209 Liberal Democrat majority in Montgomeryshire, because Alex Carlile, QC, the current MP wants to spend more time with his family.

Clarke puts his money on delay in single currency

Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, said yesterday that he would bet against the European single currency being launched on target at the start of 1999.

Told that European commis-

sioner Yves de Silguy had said the currency would start on time, the Chancellor said on BBC television's *First on Sunday*: "He has to say that, doesn't he?"

But Mr Clarke did not rule out the possibility of a 1999 launch, adding: "I'll have a bet with Yves, and he might win his bet. It's just that we've said it's

not impossible that they'll be ready by 1 January 1999, but I hope the commissioner would agree they shouldn't go ahead on 1 January 1999 if countries are not genuinely convergent and they're taking any risks by going ahead."

An ICM poll carried out for tonight's BBC *Panorama* pro-

gramme shows that while a majority, 54 per cent, of those questioned were opposed to a single currency, 65 per cent felt they were poorly informed.

And 61 per cent said they did not understand the meaning of "convergence criteria" - the economic performance measures that ministers will use to

judge whether countries are strong enough to withstand the pressures of single currency discipline.

The political manoeuvres continued yesterday, with former Europe minister Tristan Garel-Jones arguing there was a cross-party majority of pro-European MPs. Writing in a *Sunday news-*

paper he said: "What has happened over the past few years is that the minority of anti-Europeans have been able to dominate the debate because the majority have been divided by party considerations."

"The ants will squeal like stuck pigs at this... the anti-European tone of the debate in

Britain is undermining our ability to campaign for and influence the kind of Europe we want."

Mr Clarke also repudiated a suggestion that John Major was opposed to the single currency, following an interview with the *New Yorker* magazine in which he said the loss of control over in-

terest rates was "an argument for never going in, and it's one we'll have to confront at some stage."

Mr Clarke said: "If what you're suggesting is that the Prime Minister is arguing those reasons for never joining, the Prime Minister negotiated... to keep the options open."

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صكنا من الامل



David Lister

Gospel singing, always associated with black American religious music, is now being taken up by secular white men and women in Britain, eager to share in the exhilaration and community spirit that the singing brings. Lessons for what has been traditionally church and spiritual music are being sold almost in the terminology of aerobics classes. A 10-week course which started yesterday at the Jacksons Lane Community Centre in Highgate, north London, proclaimed in its opening comments: "Enjoy the exhilaration...breath control, gospel harmonisations, vocal technique and projection...join this soulful, melodic, funky and inspiring session."

Tutor Delrio Levele stresses that he wants students who do not come from a conventional religious

background to enjoy the music and celebrate a positive message.

Mr LeVale grew up singing gospel in a black gospel church in London, affiliated to an American church. He was then part of The Inspirational Choir, a gospel outfit that sang on a record by the group Madness called "The Wings Of A Dove". Now he runs the first gospel singing classes to be accredited as an examination course.

"I've long felt that there's a need to bring it out of the church," said Mr. Levale.

"For a start, the gospel is supposed to be taken out of the church. But this is not a religious class. It's a music class. On the social level it's an enjoyable free for all. On the singing level it is based on

the singing level it is based on new breathing techniques. And there is a spontaneous live feel, and experience of what it is like to be in a gospel choir with the clapping, the

swaying and the dancing."

One convert is Helen Woodcock, 30, a musician, who wanted to take up a singing course and had never done any gospel singing before. "I believe in God but I wouldn't say I was religious," she said.

"The point of this is that it's so positive and soulful it puts you on a natural high. The gospel music took hold of me because of the power in it. It must have been lovely to have grown up in the atmosphere of a black gospel environment.

"The class has all occupations, nurses, clerical workers, students. And it has black, white, Greek, Jewish, a 50-year-old and a nine-year-old, all clapping their hands and singing. It's a great atmosphere."

"And the words we sing as 'if you should go astray you can always come back home' are spiritual, but not too in-your-face religious."

Patricia Wynn Davies
Legal Affairs Editor

The latest rebellion against the Home Secretary's law and order programme will get underway tonight during the Lords' Second Reading of the Bill to introduce mandatory tougher sentences.

Peers are not likely to flout House of Lords convention by refusing to give Michael Howard's Crime (Sentences) Bill its Second Reading. But the measure is expected to come under heavy cross-party attack.

The expected onslaught comes a week after the double defeat inflicted by the Lords on the Police Bill in the face of the Government's refusal to agree to prior judicial authorisation of bugging on private property.

The Bill proposes mandatory minimum jail terms of three years for adult, third-time burglars, seven years for adult dealers in class-A drugs and indeterminate life sentences for second-time violent or sexual offenders. Critics of the measure have included former Conservative Home Secretaries Douglas Hurd and Kenneth Baker and a list of judicial figures.

The line-up of speakers in today's debate will include the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Bingham, Lord Woolf, the Master of the Rolls, former Master of the Rolls Lord Donaldson, Lord Hope of Craighead, the Scottish law lord and the former law lord Lord Ackner. At the committee stage, opponents will seek to in-

produce an exception allowing judges not to impose mandatory sentences. Judges have warned of the futility of imprisoning for seven years inadequate drug addicts who sell small quantities of drugs to fund their own habits. Others oppose the measure as an unjustified interference by the executive to the judiciary. Lord Bingham, who as Lord Chief Justice ranks as the most senior legal peer, is expected to use his first speech in the chamber since his appointment to expand on criticisms he made in a television interview in the autumn when he called for judges to retain the right to do justice in individual cases.

He pointed out that the Bill's provision for a judge to depart from a mandatory sentence where there were "exceptional" circumstances did not meet critics' concerns "at all", because the expression had been construed narrowly.

Further controversy is in prospect over Mr Howard's plan to introduce "honesty in sentencing", by making prisoners serve the actual sentence imposed by the court.

Penal experts have warned that this would cost £30m and require two new jails in addition to those already in prospect.

Mr Howard also begins battle today with a challenge before five law lords to last July's Court of Appeal ruling that he was wrong to order the boys who killed the toddler James Bulger to serve a minimum 15-year jail term.

Tourists are the biggest beach polluters, accounting for more than a fifth of the rubbish collected from seaside resorts, it was disclosed today.

A huge beach clean-up operation collected 17.5 tonnes of rubbish from 203 stretches of

Britain's coastline. Items found included an entire railway sleeper, a fridge, a washing machine, a Russian salt-pot and an aerosol can from Israel. Holidaymakers and other visitors were responsible for dropping more than 18,000 crisp and sweet packets, more than 8,000 drink cans and nearly 10,000 cigarette ends.

But the Beachwatch '96 clean-up, organised by the *Reader's Digest* and the Marine Conservation Society, did show that beaches were becoming slightly less polluted.

An average of 1,482 items of debris per kilometre were gathered from the 203 beaches, compared with 1,636 per km from 196 coastal stretches in the previous clean-up.

After tourism, shipping was the next worst polluter — blamed for 17.4 per cent of debris, including nearly 27,000 lengths of rope and cord — followed by sewage-related debris, including more than 30,000 cotton buds and 6,000 sanitary products. The 3,300 clean-up volunteers also collected more than 4,500 lengths of fishing line that can entangle and kill wildlife.

A spokesman for the Marine Conservation Society said: "We have to change attitudes towards litter and encourage individual responsibility in today's throwaway society."



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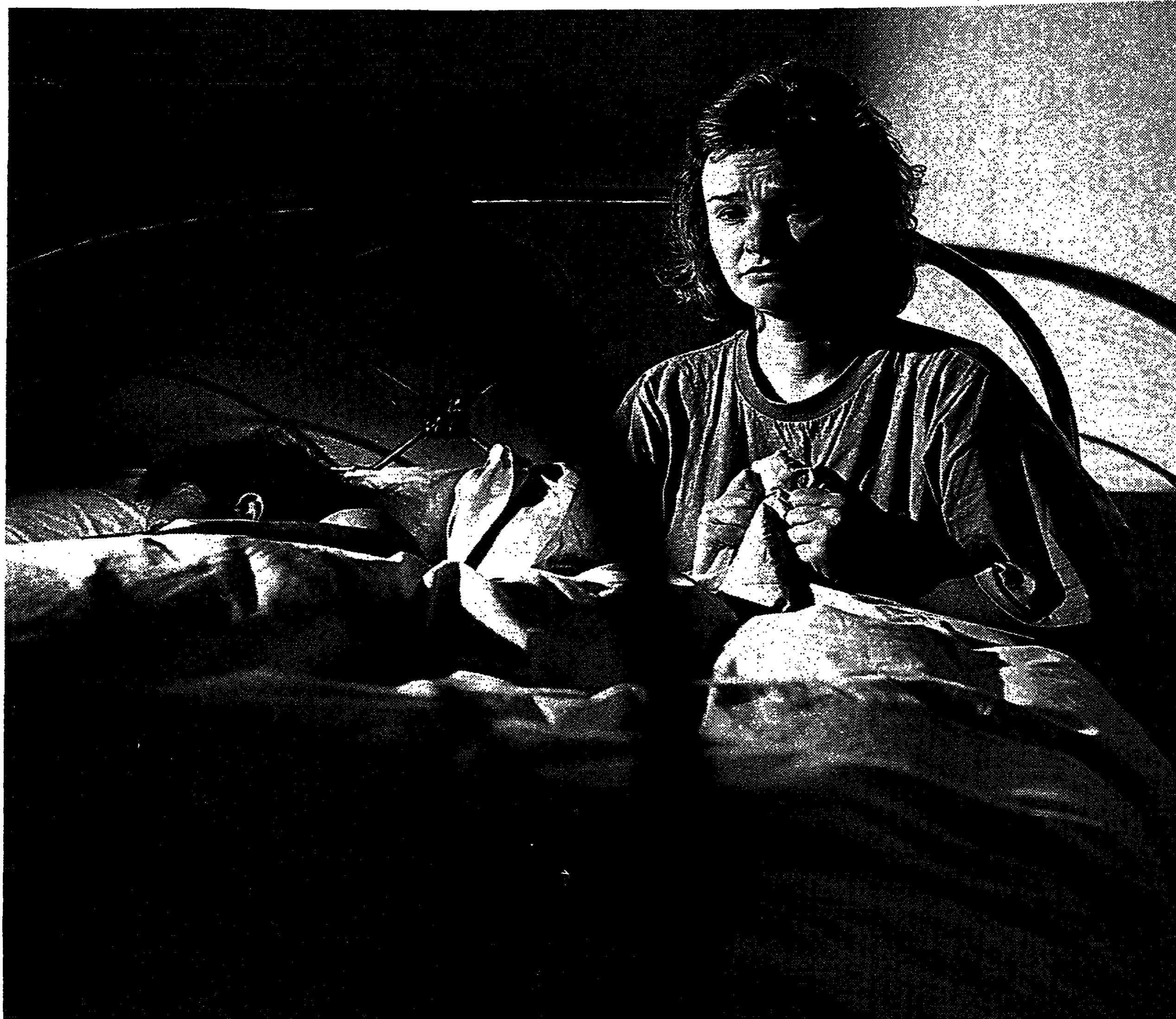
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the Hanratty case



'I'm dying tomorrow, please clear my name'

James Hanratty was hanged for what was dubbed the crime of the century. But he didn't do it, writes **Jason Benetto**



Victims: James Hanratty, above, was adamant right until his hanging at Bedford jail that he had not murdered Michael Gregsten and brutally raped and shot Valerie Storie, pictured being comforted in hospital

On 4 April 1962 James Hanratty, a 25-year-old petty burglar, was hanged – one of the last three people to go to the gallows in Britain.

His alleged crime was to have shot dead a married man in cold blood and then raped his lover before shooting her repeatedly, paralysing her from the waist down.

The evidence presented at Hanratty's trial would almost certainly fail to secure a conviction in a court today. The case against him was at best flimsy, based largely on his identification by the crippled lover, who admitted she only saw him for a few seconds and failed to pick him out on the first police identity parade.

Yet despite almost 35 years of campaigning by Hanratty's family and supporters it is only now that the British justice system seems ready to admit it made a mistake.

Home Office officials are understood to have concluded that Hanratty was innocent. Michael Howard, the Home

Secretary, is shortly expected to announce that he is to refer the case to the Court of Appeal, where the conviction is expected to be quashed.

But Hanratty's supporters will want to know why it has taken so long? Clearly, the wheels of justice often move very slowly. However, a less benign explanation could be that the exposure of one of the country's most infamous executions as a sham is a grave embarrassment and yet another plank in the

Hanratty would also raise the disturbing question: if Hanratty did not commit the murder, who did?

The killing shocked a nation not used to apparently random murders and acts of unspeakable brutality and cruelty.

The victims were Michael Gregsten, 36, a married man – whose regular infidelities were well known to his wife – and his mistress Valerie Storie, 22. The couple had met at the Government's Road Research Lab-

Mr Gregsten's Morris Minor car when there was a sharp tap on the window. Gregsten wound it down to face a revolver. "This is a hold-up," announced the smartly dressed stranger. "I am a desperate man." He then climbed in and ordered Mr Gregsten to drive for about 60 miles through Slough and across the suburbs of north-west London before coming to a halt at a lay-by on the A6 near Bedford, known as Deadman's Hill.

At the end of the two hour trip, he asked Mr Gregsten to pass him a duflie bag. As he did so, he was killed with two shots from the revolver. The murderer then raped the woman on the back seat of the vehicle before shooting Miss Storie repeatedly at close range, paralysing her for life. Afterwards, he fled in the car.

Throughout her six-hour ordeal Miss Storie only once saw the killer clearly – when his face was illuminated by the headlights of a passing car.

After Hanratty's arrest in Blackpool following his "identification" by Mr Gregsten's wife Janet, further investigations discovered two .38 calibre cases from the gun used in the murder in room 24 of the Vienna Hotel in London, where the accused man had stayed under the false name of James Ryan.

In the first identity parade Miss Storie did not pick Hanratty. At the second, she made each suspect repeat the sentence spoken by the killer: "Be quiet, will you, I am thinking." Like the murderer, Hanratty pronounced thinking "finking". After 20 minutes Hanratty was chosen by Miss Storie, who was confined to a wheel chair.

Documents released later showed that Miss Storie admitted: "I may not be able to pick him out. My memory of this man is fading". In addition, two earlier Identikit pictures she helped draw up did not match Hanratty.

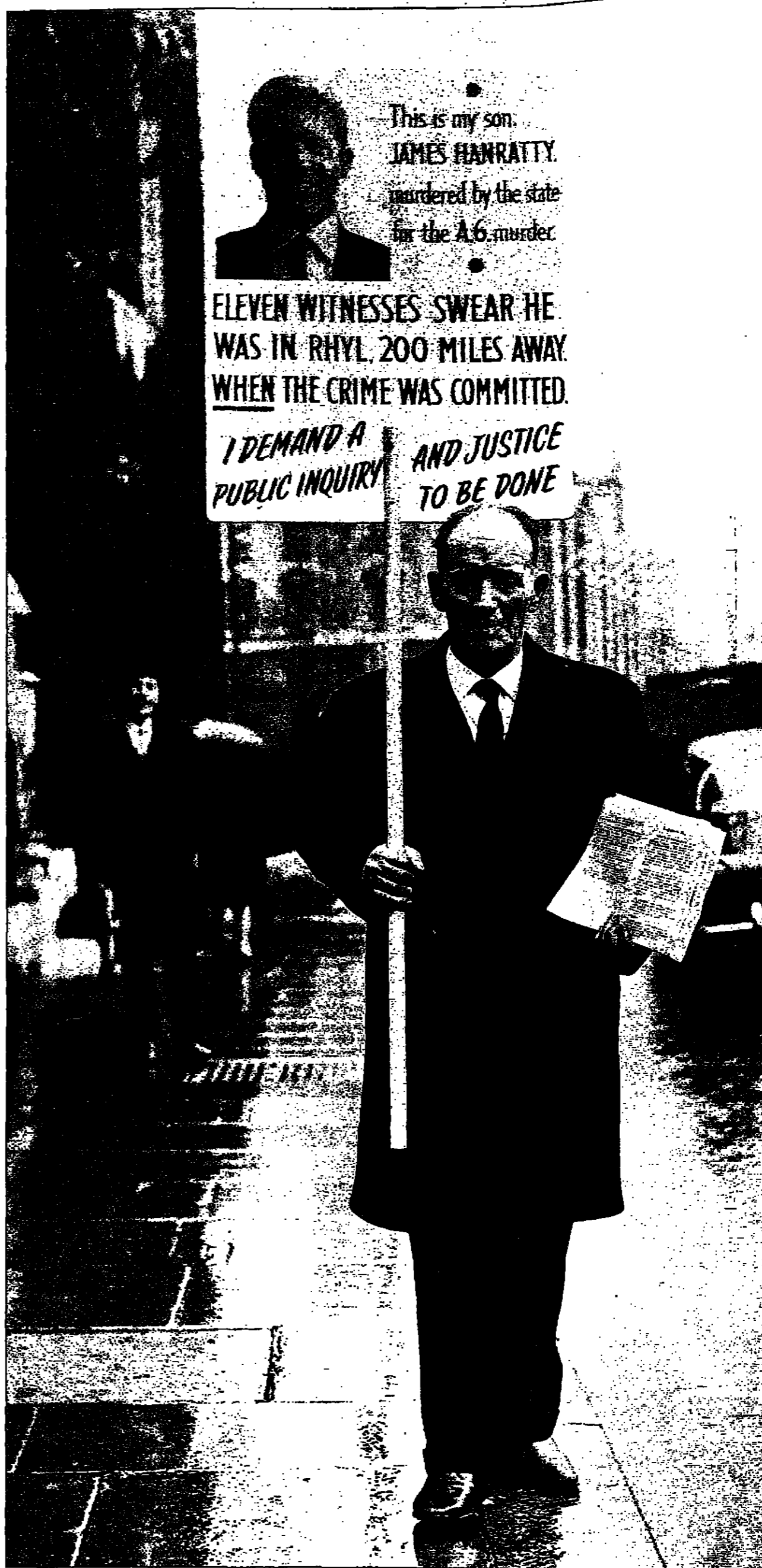
Additional evidence against Hanratty was given by Charles France, a criminal, who committed suicide two weeks before the hanging. But it was the vital identification evidence given by Miss Storie that swayed the jury, who after nine-and-a-half hours delivered a guilty verdict.

On the morning of his execution at Bedford jail, Hanratty wrote to his family, insisting he was innocent and asking them to clear his name. His brother, Michael Hanratty, 58, said: "The day before Jimmy was hanged he said: 'I'm dying tomorrow but I'm innocent. Clear my name.' This is what we need to be able to do."

The campaign has gone on ever since and during the past 35 years a wealth of evidence has emerged which supports the claim that an innocent man was wrongly executed.

One of the most implausible and incredible parts of the case against Hanratty is the acceptance that a town-dwelling bit-part criminal should stalk a couple to a cornfield in Berkshire to carry out a random killing.

There was also not a shred of forensic evidence found in the vehicle to link Hanratty.



Defiant: James Hanratty Sr protested regularly outside the House of Parliament, handing out leaflets to passers by, in a bid to clear his convicted son's name over the crime that shocked a nation

Hanratty also had a good alibi. At first he said he had been in Liverpool, but refused to name his friends. Extraordinarily, he changed his statement to say that he had stayed in a bed and breakfast house in Rhyll, North Wales – 250 miles from the scene of the crime. Again no witnesses were provided, but between 1966 and 1971 fourteen people came forward to support his story.

For many campaigners, including the journalist Paul Foot, author of the book *Who killed*

cally, Alphon could hardly drive, but Hanratty was experienced. Alphon also had a striking likeness to the Identikit picture produced immediately after the attack.

In addition, he was seen at the pub where the two lovers met on the night they were abducted. He has been reported as repeatedly admitting his guilt, claiming he was paid £5,000 to break up the relationship between Gregsten and Storie.

Alphon, 66, made an alleged "confession" in Paris several years later saying that he was asked by someone close to Gregsten's family to frighten the couple. However, speaking to the *Independent* three days ago he denied that he had ever admitted to the killing and insisted that Hanratty had been hired by Mrs Gregsten to break up the relationship. "I don't have to prove my innocence," he added. Reports of his alleged confessions had been distorted.

Mrs Gregsten fiercely denied any involvement in a plot during a series of interviews with Paul Foot shortly before her death in January 1995. But she did admit that she was no longer convinced of Hanratty's guilt, pointing instead to Peter Alphon.

The growing doubts and pressure from campaigners and family – who have remained determined even since the death of James Hanratty Sr who protested defiantly outside the House of Commons – led to a fresh police inquiry into the case. Detective Superintendent

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argument against capital punishment. Indeed, the Scotland Yard detective who re-investigated the case is understood to have reversed his pro-hanging stance as a consequence.

The posthumous pardon of

oratory, near Slough, where he was a research scientist and she was his laboratory assistant.

The lovers used to rendezvous at a cornfield at Taplow, near Maidenhead, in Berkshire. On the evening of 22 August, 1961, they were together in

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سكا من الامم

Anarchy stalks Albanian cities as cheated investors vent fury in orgy of destruction

Government unable to maintain order after collapse of pyramid schemes, writes **Andrew Gumbel**

Albania was languishing on the brink of total anarchy last night as tens of thousands of people who had been cheated out of their life-savings took to the streets, tore up paving stones, battled with riot police, ransacked public buildings and started fires, including one that raged through the country's biggest petrochemical complex.

The wave of popular anger, triggered by the collapse of three of Albania's so-called pyramid investment schemes and fuelled over the past few days by a swelling tide of public protest, seemed to know no bounds. The efforts of President Sali Berisha and his government to bring the country to order had little or no effect.

centre of the city. For two hours there were pitched battles as the demonstrators hurled stones and pieces of marble paving from the steps of the Palace of Culture. When they attempted to storm parliament, where deputies were meeting in emergency session, they were repulsed by water-cannon and gunshots fired into the air.

There were even more extraordinary scenes over the weekend in Lushnje, a small town about 60 miles south of the capital where thousands of people clamoured for the release of Rapsud Xhaferi, the organiser of one of the failed pyramid schemes who was arrested last week in an ill-fated attempt to appease the public.

Believing that the release of Mr Xhaferi, who comes from Lushnje, would be the answer to their problems, the rioters set fire to the town hall, smashed the windows of a state-owned bank, gathered up as many documents as they could find and burned them in the main square. They also set up barricades of burning tyres on Albania's only north-south main road.

On Saturday afternoon Albania's Foreign Minister Tritan Shehu, the second most powerful man in the country after President Berisha, decided to fly into Lushnje by helicopter to try and calm things down. But as soon as he arrived he was struck on the back of the neck by a flurry of stones, beaten up and dragged off to a changing-room in the local football stadium. At least 10 policemen were also badly beaten.

It is still not clear whether Mr Shehu was kidnapped or whether he hid himself to avoid a public lynching. But it was only several hours later, under the cover of darkness, that he managed to make his getaway and return to Tirana.

Yesterday the mayhem in Lushnje resumed with the ransacking and burning of the law courts and the comprehensive trashing of the local office of the ruling Democratic Party.

There were similar scenes in Berat, a little further to the south, and in the port of Vlore, Albania's second city, where a crowd of 3,000 torched the town hall in defiance of serried ranks of riot police and a unit of army troops.

The attitude of the authorities has looked nothing short of blind panic, with President Berisha promising the repayment of all lost investments – a promise that nobody seems to believe – and pledging to launch a full investigation into the financiers he once described as investment experts but now refers to as usurers and criminals.

The pyramid schemes worked rather like a chain letter, with unrealistically attractive rates of interest of about 10 per cent per month being maintained only as long as more and more investors come forward to fill the schemes' coffers.

Popular in many parts of Eastern Europe since 1989, they are widely recognised as excellent covers for money-laundering and personal enrichment schemes by public officials and racketeers.

They also have a habit of collapsing all at once, leaving poor investors bereft of what little hard currency they ever possessed.

In Albania, the schemes and their collapse have been particularly brutal, partly because of the autocratic nature of the regime, which almost certainly approved of, and actively colluded in, them, and partly because of the extreme poverty of the population. Many people sold their houses and valuables in order to take part.

The riots do not, however, express widespread revulsion at the government as such, but rather an irrational desire by people to fight for what they believe to be their right – the return of their money and the high returns which it was supposed to earn.

Several people who have lost hundreds, or thousands, of dollars in the past few days say all they want is to find a new pyramid scheme in which to pour another pile of money.



Short-changed: Angry demonstrators carrying an injured protester past a cordon of riot police in Tirana's main square

Photograph: AFP



Tritan Shehu: Pelted with rocks by the crowd

Calls for reform increase Turkish tension

Tony Barber
Europe Editor

In a sign of rising political tensions in Turkey, both the Islamist-led government and military leaders have reacted furiously to a proposal from some of the country's leading private businessmen for sweeping democratic reforms. "Cheap political heroism" was the derisive phrase used by one military officer to describe the report presented to parliament last week by the Turkish Association of Industrialists and Businessmen.

Among the report's recommendations were more-effective protection of the civil rights of ethnic Kurds, shorter periods of prison custody to prevent police torture and other human rights abuses, and the subjecting of the military high command to defence ministry control. The businessmen also proposed the abolition of the national security council, a powerful institution which ensures the armed forces considerable influence over certain areas of government policy.

Military officers, quoted anonymously in the Turkish press, dismissed the report's proposals as based on a "lack of knowledge" about the true state of affairs in Turkey. But liberal Turkish and foreign commentators said the businessmen had clearly touched a raw nerve.

The armed forces have seized power on three occasions since 1960, ostensibly to defend the modern secular republic against political enemies. The army has remained a powerful presence in the wings since 1983, when it last returned power to civilian politicians. It plays a particularly important role in determining policy in the civil war that has raged since 1984 in the mainly Kurdish south-east of Turkey.

The businessmen's report also attracted criticism from the Turkish government, a coalition of the Islamist Welfare Party and the centre-right True Path Party. The trade minister, Yalim Erez, said the report had been produced by "intellectuals who do not know the realities of this country".

However, the armed forces and the Islamists have not always seen eye to eye since Necmettin Erbakan, the Welfare Party leader, came to power last June as Turkey's first Islamist prime minister since the establishment of the secular republic in 1923. But, as far as the Kurdish war is concerned, Mr Erbakan, like his secular predecessors, has essentially left the army with a free hand to crack down on the rebels.

The report was by no means the first such appeal for more humane treatment of Kurds and for a political rather than a military solution to the war. A similar report, commissioned by the Union of Chambers and Trade Bourses and published in 1995, said that support for the far-left Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) would diminish if the government tackled the grievances of ordinary Kurds.

More than 21,000 people are estimated to have died in the war since 1984.

Prize battle strips Academy of all honour

Mary Dejevsky
Paris

It is hard to imagine what Calixthe Beye and the Académie Française could possibly have in common. She is a witty black woman writer from French Cameroon in her thirties with a certain iconoclastic bent. The Academy is the perpetuating and predominantly male club of France, great and good which stand guard over France's scholarly tradition. But it was to Beye that the Academy awarded last year's prize for the best novel, a work called, prophetically, *Some, Lost Honours*.

Now, both the Academy and Beye are in the dock. They, for having put the weight of their authority behind a plagiarist. She, not just for plagiarism, but also for recidivism.

The first aspersions on Beye's work were cast by the satirical, investigative weekly, *le Canard Enchaîné*, in early 1995, when passages from her book *Little Prince of Belleville* were compared with very similar passages from novels by two American writers, Howard Buten and Charles Williams, which had sold well in France.

Pierre Assouline, editor and director of the glossy, bookish monthly, *Le Monde*, took up the cudgels. For him, Beye's artistic integrity, or lack of it, has become something of a crusade. He calls it persecution.

Last May, after months of bitter allegations and counter-allegations, the first victory went to her detractors. In a lawsuit brought by Howard Buten's French publisher, Beye was found by the court to have "partially counterfeited" his novel. She and her publishers, Albin Michel, were ordered to pay a total of 100,000 francs (£11,000) to Buten, his translator and his French publisher, Le Seuil.

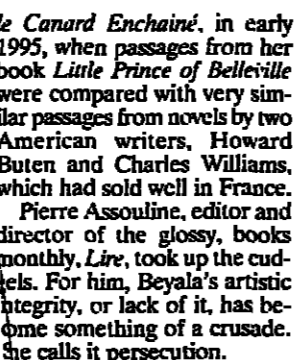
Calixthe Beye: "Can no one who was born in a shanty town be fully recognised as a writer in Paris?"

The case, according to Mr Assouline, bore more resemblance to a seminar on comparative literature than a court of law. Under pressure from her publisher, it was said, Beye decided not to appeal. Mr Assouline has since found passages and episodes from Beye's work that appear to have been culled from other several works, including Alice Walker's novel, *The Color Purple*.

Paule Constant, the French author of a novel called *White Spirit* has added her voice to the accusations. At first, she told *Le Monde* magazine, she did not want to believe it. "But when I examined the text, whose passages of my book sprang out at me from the mould that imprisoned them."

Although Calixthe Beye did not formally contest the verdict of the court, she was forthright in defending herself outside it. She talked about "coincidence" and scenes half-remembered. She accused her detractors of spite and suggested she was being singled out for criticism because she was a woman and black.

After the court's judgment, however, there was general surprise that Beye's most recent novel, *Lost Honours*, was even nominated, let alone shortlisted, for last year's prestigious Académie Française prize. When it was pronounced the winner on 24 October, there was consternation.



Calixthe Beye: "Can no one who was born in a shanty town be fully recognised as a writer in Paris?"



Calixthe Beye: "Can no one who was born in a shanty town be fully recognised as a writer in Paris?"

Some of the judges defended their choice by citing what they called "a very French tradition from La Fontaine to Proust" which had left the border between borrowing and pastiche "poorly defined". "Everyone takes their inspiration from everyone else," was another defence.

Reviewing the selection process in the just-published February issue of *Le Monde*, Pierre Assouline renewed his campaign. If this year's prize had to go to Albin Michel, he said – alluding to the alleged "share-out" of prizes among the publishers, that publisher had more than one entry.

"But," he went on, "for reasons that would seem not to have much to do with literature, it had to be Beye and no one else" and he accused "certain members of the Academy" of using "all their talents and social graces" to win over the rest. Others talked about the "susceptibility of some judges to female charms".

Now Mr Assouline claims to have found striking similarities between passages of Beye's winning novel and Ben Okri's *The Famished Road*. She responded with charges of misogyny. This weekend, though, she was stung into giving a long, rambling response which was published in the daily *Figaro*.

Addressing the problem of apparent borrowings from other works, she says her novels (10 so far) derive from the African "oral tradition" where existing ideas and phrases are repeated and embellished. She refers to herself as a "mere woman", accuses Mr Assouline of bounding "a poor black come from nowhere" and says her experience makes her wonder whether anyone "born in a shanty-town" can be "fully recognised as a writer in Paris".

There, for the moment, the case rests.

Justice holds death in the wings

The last time we saw Moeen Ouseiran, he was winging – pale but smiling – on his bed in the American University Hospital, exhausted after another blood transfusion for leukaemia. He knew he was dying but insisted on living, asking about events in southern Lebanon, Bosnia, Algeria and – far more important to him – turning up at the high cot to fulfil his role as a judge in the Lebanese Third Appeal chamber.

We gave him some copies of *L'Express*, *Le Point*, *Paris Match* – his French was better than his English – a left him to what was his final penultimate hospital visit before his final court appearance and his death.

A small, rather gruff man with old-lioned manners, Moeen was for the courts. In a land where – in the words of one local academic – officials have in the past proved themselves "fessors of corruption", has incorruptible. At the be of the 1975-1990

BEIRUT DAYS

civil war, he could be found walking across the front line, under shell fire, from his home in west Beirut to the court chambers in the east. He refused a government-offered Mercedes, preferring his old Peugeot. For years, he declined a bodyguard, only accepting one in the last weeks of his life – provided the soldier never carried a gun. He even refused the small red badge on his registration plate that would have allowed him to overtake traffic jams and parking restrictions. "In the courts I am a judge, but in the street I am an ordinary man," he used to tell us.

Defendants and governments alike found Moeen Ouseiran a prickly character. When the cabinet expected a guilty verdict in the case of Yehya Chammas, an MP accused on drug-related charges, Moeen Ouseiran ordered a re-trial. When the Americans expected a conviction of two men accused of kidnapping the US Ambassador Meloy in 1976 – found murdered three days later – he freed both of them on the grounds that they were covered by a post-civil war amnesty, that they had not murdered the ambassador and that

the real killer had died in a subsequent bomb explosion in Paris. Moeen was a canny man who knew his politics. When the anti-Syrian Phalangist militia leader Samir Geagea was put on trial for his life, charged with the brutal killing of his Christian rival Dany Chamoun, Moeen declined the court headship because his workload was "too heavy". Friends say he believed

in his last days, he was confronted by lawyers acting for a financial institution accused of fraud who knew that he was dying of leukaemia. Indeed, in one of his last appearances, Moeen could be seen, sitting in his red, white and black judge's robes, wiping away a nosebleed as his brain haemorrhaged.

But, as the lawyers tried to spin out their case, the judge increased the speed of the hearings. And a few days before he died, Moeen was able to declare the bank guilty. Maybe his father Mounir, a Shia Muslim prelate, had something to do with it. "I know I am going to die and my conscience is clear," the 62-year-old judge told his family in the two years after his leukaemia was discovered.

He refused to die in hospital – he had a phobia of being slotted into a refrigerated mortuary – so he finally died in a coma in his own bed in his faded, noisy, almost street-level apartment off Corniche Mazraa, a judge to the very end. His military bodyguard, still unarmed, came to pay his respects. President Elias Hrawi bestowed upon Moeen a posthumous Commander of the Order of the Cedar, a kind of Lebanese OBE.

The Ouseirans, it should be

added, are as tough as they are principled. In Islamic tradition, the men accompany the dead to the cemetery while the women wait their ritual farewells from the balcony. But Moeen's eldest sister Amira – a black-cloaked lady in her eighties – hopped down the stairs after his coffin on the day of Moeen's final journey, jumped nimbly into the passenger seat of the hearse and refused to budge. "Let anyone dare stop me from accompanying my brother to his burial place," she shouted at the astonished mourners.

When the cortege arrived at the Zaatar mosque in Sidon – not far from Moeen's beloved orchards at the village of Sarafand – Amira and her younger sister Zeinab agreed to follow the Muslim custom of allowing only the men into the mosque for the final prayers over the body. But at the family plot on a tiny peninsula above the Mediterranean, Amira and Zeinab refused to be kept from the grave. Sheikh Abdul-Amir Kabalan insisted that they should return to their car but Amira muttered: "Sheikh or no Sheikh, I'm going to be here."

And so she was, as one good man was laid to his eternal rest beside the shell-splintered grave-stone of his cleric father.

Robert Fisk

In the courts I am a judge, but in the street I am an ordinary man

that however guilty Geagea proved to be, the case was political. But when we turned up for press passes to the Geagea trial and found ourselves stymied by unhelpful court bureaucrats, Moeen scribbled a tiny note and the same func-

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Israeli police to investigate political graft case

Patrick Cockburn
Jerusalem

Israeli police yesterday started an investigation into corruption and deal-making in the appointment of the attorney-general, which could bring down the government.

At the heart of the scandal is an accusation by the Channel One television station that Benjamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, nominated Roni Bar-On, an obscure party loyalist, as

attorney-general to allow a political ally of the government to escape corruption charges.

Mr Bar-On's appointment was greeted with astonishment and derision by the legal profession and senior judges, who forced him to resign after 12 hours. It was reported that two-thirds of the cabinet had never heard of Mr Bar-On, but it was the one third who knew him who voted against him.

Last week state-owned Israeli television said his appointment

was made after he promised to arrange a plea bargain for Aryeh Deri, leader of Shas, a party with 10 members in the Knesset, who is on trial for corruption. In return Mr Deri promised to support the Hebron agreement, leading the scandal to be called the "Bar-On for Hebron" affair.

Mr Netanyahu and his government denied any such deal. The television reporter has yet to explain the source for her claims, but may be forced to do

so by the police investigation. In general terms there is little doubt the government wanted to get rid of the previous attorney-general and replace him by somebody more malleable, but it would be surprising if they made a specific agreement with Mr Bar-On.

In its seven months in office the government has proved accident-prone and Mr Netanyahu has made several bizarre appointments. His first choice as justice minister had to

withdraw, accused of making false statements to the Supreme Court. His office director was alleged to have a long record of making harassing calls to women. Other right-wing leaders are in trouble, such as Ehud Olmert, Mayor of Jerusalem, who is on trial for fraud.

Mr Netanyahu has accused Channel One of extreme bias against him.

Rafik Halabi, editor of its nightly news, said he was confident. "We will take this all the

way," he said. "I'm not concerned, I'm not scared and I'm not worried. We will protect our sources, but will act within the confines of the law."

Senior members of the government appear to lack confidence in what Mr Netanyahu's kitchen cabinet - often compared to that around President Richard Nixon - might have got up to. Natan Sharansky, the Trade and Industry Minister, said yesterday: "If there was any kind of bargain, I recommend

to everyone involved to admit it and resign, because this is an unprecedented crime." Avigdor Kabalani, Internal Security Minister, said: "If the affair is in fact as it appears, there is no doubt that this government has no future."

Mr Netanyahu himself called for a police investigation. But he has moved in the past few days from total denial to qualified denial, saying that if there was any deal, he did not know about it. It turns out that his own

choice for the position of attorney-general - an important job in Israel, since whoever holds it acts like a special prosecutor in the US - was Dan Avidan, Mr Deri's lawyer, who turned down the job.

There is no doubt that Mr Netanyahu wanted an attorney-general he could control, but his political future may depend on whether he or anybody in his government ever spelt out what they expected Mr Bar-On to do for them.

Moscow nervous as Chechens vote for new leader

Had you asked anyone in the snow-clad streets of Grozny one year ago if they would be going to the polls today to determine the leader of what is, in all but law, their own nation, they would have laughed bitterly.

A year ago war, launched in late 1994 by Boris Yeltsin in a bid to crush Chechnya's independence, seemed doomed to grind on, adding noughts to the many thousands already on the death toll, while the rest of the world turned a blind eye.

Yet - six months after an unexpected peace deal - Chechens will today vote in the first round of an election to choose a leader from a list of 13 candidates, all of whom are separatists. Moscow is looking on in a state of nervousness, mindful that the final results could bring a disaster.

One of the two considered most likely to go through to the second round are Aslan Maskhadov, the former Chechen fighters' chief of staff, who is seen by the Kremlin as a moderate. But the other is Shamil Basayev, the guerrilla commander whom Russia still regards as its most wanted terrorist.

The election appears to have all the hallmarks of a genuine contest. Citizens of Grozny, once buried under rubble, have been engulfed by a tide of promotional literature, posters and rhetoric.

Every night Chechens have been settling down to watch hour after hour of election programmes, shot on shaky video cameras, on five channels.

All over Grozny the inhabitants of bombed out apartment blocks sit glued to unedited speeches, campaign rallies, discussion programmes. The city may have no running water, piles of fetid rubbish, no jobs, and precious few intact buildings, but it can at least lay claim to a highly educated electorate.

"We just want people to be able to choose," said Abdul Sinbarigov, a 31-year-old Chechen businessman, as he sat in the shell-scarred ninth floor apartment that is also the headquarters of AS, his two-man TV and radio station. (So named because of his initials.)

After the August peace deal, Mr Sinbarigov invested \$70,000 (£42,000) in electronic equipment, got a temporary broadcasting licence, and set about filling the airwaves with election-related programmes in the hope of persuading his countrymen to make the "right" choice. "If they don't, there won't be any more TV stations here, there will just be war," he remarks gloomily, as the sound of Rod Stewart's "You're The Star" boomed out from his radio station in a nearby bedroom.

The right choice, in his book, is Basayev. "He is able, pure and clean," he remarked, sitting beneath a sketch of a fanged and red-nosed Boris Yeltsin. References to Basayev's raid on a southern Russian town in which he seized more than 1,000 hostages, or his bank robberies, or aircraft hijacking, are waved away. "If you think he was a terrorist, then a million times more terrorist acts were carried out by the Russians."

It appears this sentiment is catching on. The 32-year-old

Russia's most wanted terrorist is among the candidates, writes Phil Reeves in Grozny

Basayev, who has swapped his military fatigues for a sober grey coat, has proved a surprisingly effective campaigner.

The several thousand Chechens who turned out on Saturday to hear him speak, surrounded by gunmen, in Grozny's bullet-strewn central square listened in rapt silence, interrupted only by a rumble of laughter. Basayev is fond of jokes.

His rise is causing concern among his opponents. Islam Yaxiev, an aide to Chechnya's interim president, Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev - another leading contender - refused to answer questions about the guerrilla leader yesterday, beyond repeating: "The Chechen people will choose the President, and will continue to build an independent state."

Overriding everything is the desire for legitimacy. The candidates say they will work together, no matter who wins. The republic is desperate that the world should recognise the poll as the first step to nationhood. Some 60 international observers have arrived, despite the still unsolved murder by gunmen of six Red Cross workers as they slept in their beds in a rural hospital.

But recognition will be far harder if Basayev is the victor. In Moscow, there will be a howl of fury from the generals and opposition politicians who have long condemned the peace deal as a capitulation to criminals and terrorists. And there will be widespread allegations that the elections were illegal.

Leading politicians have already made that claim, citing the fact that many of the 300,000

Chechens living outside the republic as refugees will be unable to vote.

Polling booths will be set up near the Chechen border in neighbouring republics, but not, for instance, in Moscow.

But Russia's long-term response is harder to gauge. The Yeltsin administration is unlikely

to want to get embroiled in another crippling war, and will not want to send troops back into the republic, no matter how great the political pressure to do so.

Both Chechnya and Moscow both need a lasting agreement over the strategically crucial oil pipeline, which runs through the republic, and will transport Caspian oil to the West. But striking any kind of relationship will be extremely difficult.

That could however, be true, no matter who wins. Russia continues to maintain that Chechnya will remain part of the federation, although a final agreement on its status has been deferred until 2001. Yet if there is one thing that all the presidential wannabes agree on it is that the issue is already all but settled. "We will insist on being acknowledged as an independent sovereign state," said Aslan Maskhadov yesterday. And he is the moderate one.

We will insist on being acknowledged as an independent sovereign state



Rite of passage: Young men waiting to take part in a traditional ceremony of initiation in the village of Taung in South Africa's North-West Province. More than 2,000 young men and 400 young women took part in the ceremony after passing their tribal examinations
Photograph: Reuters

China plays its press card with HK

Teresa Poole
Peking

The unpredictable nature of China's legal system was again exposed at the weekend when Peking unexpectedly paroled a Hong Kong newspaper journalist who had served three years of a 12-year sentence for "stealing state secrets".

When the harsh sentence was originally passed on Xi Yang, it was interpreted as a blunt warning to Hong Kong reporters that the territory's press freedoms did not extend to the mainland.

Saturday's release of Mr Xi was similarly seen as a political

decision, this time an attempt by Peking to try to calm the mood in the colony after a week of rising anger over China's plans to scrap key parts of the Bill of Rights after 1 July.

Mr Xi, a mainland living in Hong Kong, was arrested in October 1993 after writing an article for his newspaper, *Ming Pao*, about China's interest in state secrets.

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Peking begs citizens to return Ming bricks

Teresa Poole

There are many uses for a Ming dynasty brick, and most of them no longer involve encircling a Chinese city.

Three decades ago, Chairman Mao's government knocked down Peking's historic city wall to make way for the second ring road. Resourceful local residents spirited away some of the rubble, turning the 50lb blocks into everything from door-stops to kitchen walls and bomb-shelters.

Now, the cultural relics authorities are asking Pekingers to hand back their booty, and thousands of bricks from the old Ming city wall - more than 30,000 so far - are reappearing so that one small part of the past can be put back together again.

At the designated collection site, the bricks are arriving by bicycle, tricycle cart, and sometimes taxi. Call a hotline number, and Qi Kusun at the state-run Peking Antiquity Reconstruction Company will leap into his blue truck (its banner reading: "Love the old capital, give back the city wall") and come to pick up your bricks.

Mr Qi has developed quite an eye for Ming masonry. "These ones aren't bad!" he exclaimed after being summoned to a building site in western Peking. Chipping off ice, he showed how the stamp on the side of each brick identified the year of production and the firing kiln.

Zhang Lailong, whose hovel was next in line to be demolished, said his family had long ago acquired three old bricks. "They



City's renewal: A construction worker taking a break at the site of the 15th-century Bell Tower which is being restored along with Peking's ancient wall and several other historical landmarks
Photograph: Reuters

were put under the bed to make it more stable," he said.

Mr Qi's unit is run by the Peking Cultural Relics Bureau which recently launched a plan to renovate and extend a stretch of the city wall just east of the main railway station, one of the few places where anything is left.

Even these precious remains had been set for demolition by a Sino-Dutch building project, until a sharp-eyed Chinese man

working nearby wrote to the local newspaper to alert people.

Public sentiments were roused, the bulldozers halted, and the official call went out for the return of old bricks for the rebuilding and an associated museum project.

The Peking wall originally dated from 1267 when the conquering Mongols built a new city with earthen ramparts. A century later, the Ming dynasty

rulers built new north and south walls around a smaller settlement, and then in 1420 also enclosed the east and west Mongol walls with brick. The resulting structure was made up of an earthen centre up to 10 yards wide, with brick exteriors two yards thick on either side.

Anyone in Peking over 40 has fond memories of the wall. Michael Crook, a Briton who grew up in Peking, recalled it

in the early Sixties: "On the way home from school, we used to climb up and look about on the top of the wall. It was all very pleasantly dilapidated and overgrown with bushes and jujubes."

The demolition teams struck in 1965, when the government gave the go-ahead for the new ring road. The half-mile long stretch which is the focus of the renovation project, is the inside

brick casing of one section of the former east wall.

Mr Crook who has carefully researched the wall's history, is concerned that the few remnants are preserved rather than reconstructed. "I'm terribly worried that they might decide to restore it or renovate it, while what really needed is protection."

"My theory is that China is still very poor in another 20 or 30 years he authorities would have the resources to do things properly. In the meantime, the less one better, because the brick record has been patchy. The people's notion of preservation is to tear the whole thing down and rebuild with new materials."

Behind all this propaganda, the campaign to old bricks does seem to have touched a chord with the people of Peking. There have been 2,000 calls to the hotline to arrange collection, and dozens of people have struggled themselves to deliver back heavy slabs. The only reward honours is a certificate.

Liu Jincui, 54, who lives near the old north-west corner of the Ming wall, took his bicycle to rescue 20 bricks from nearby building site. "I called the hotline almost every day. There are a huge number of old bricks at the building site. I am afraid the big machines will destroy them and take them away as trash."

His wife laughed: "My husband gave me every evening as he goes to the site to pick the bricks. But I'm not quite keen!"

West gives Mobutu green light to unleash dogs of war in Zaire

Off the record, the Western diplomat is blunt. His country is not generally in favour of refugees suffering or dying but in this case one must consider who they are.

More than 200,000 Rwandan Hutu refugees were this week trapped in the heart of the Zairean jungle when Zaire finally launched its mercenary-led counter-offensive against the Rwandan-backed rebels who have captured a huge swathe of eastern Zaire.

Congregated around the towns of Amisi, Tingi Tingi and Shabunda, weak after trekking hundreds of kilometres west through the bush, they are surviving on supplies which have been flown in by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

While the UNHCR lobbies the international community, the rebels and Zaire to rescue them, there is little sign that anyone is prepared to help. It is quite different from November last year, a month into the rebellion, when the world clamoured for action to save more than a million Rwandan Hutu refugees trapped in eastern Zaire and a multi-national UN force was poised to intervene.

The crisis "ended" with the awesome spectacle of 700,000 refugees spontaneously making their own way back across the border. The world breathed a sigh of relief and switched its television sets off. Those now trapped in the Zairean jungle are the rumour that walked against the tide.

Regime's bloody counter-offensive enjoys world's discreet backing, writes Mary Braid in Kinshasa

Although the plight of the Hutu refugees attracted worldwide sympathy, they were regarded with ambivalence by many observers in the Great Lakes. Their flight to Zaire followed the 1994 Hutu genocide of 800,000 Rwandan Tutsis. The UN refugee camps became the base from which those who were guilty of genocide plotted to recapture Rwanda from the new Tutsi-led government. The Rwandan government backed the rebellion in eastern Zaire to eradicate the threat on its doorstep.

In his plush Kinshasa office, the Western diplomat admits that among the refugees now languishing in the jungle there are innocent children and adults. "But there are many, many Interhams" [the organisers of the genocide], he says, "people who have trekked into Zaire because they can never go home." Why, he implies, should he care?

Now that the world is not watching, the question appears academic. It is convenient to shelve the vexed issue as the stakes rise in the Great Lakes. With the launch of the government counter-offensive, led by



Trapped by fighting: Rwandan Hutu refugee children waiting this week for UNHCR aid to reach Tingi Tingi in eastern Zaire

Photograph: AFP

200 to 300 foreign mercenaries and two battalions of Angolan Unita rebels, more than 700,000 people in eastern Zaire were reported to be on the move. The likelihood of a regional catastrophe, which threatens to engulf the whole of central Africa, has increased.

In Kinshasa, some diplomats say a Great Lakes war, pitting Rwanda and Uganda against Zaire, is already clandestinely under way, and that the uprising in eastern Zaire was only a smokescreen for a Rwandan attack.

This theory is being advanced now with greater vigour than before. The rebels, under Laurent Kabila, an opponent of Zaire's corrupt dictator, General Mobutu Sese Seko, are rubbished; the capabilities of the Ugandan Zairean army, which is under new leadership, are being played up. The conflict is reported to be escalating, with



Mobutu: Put mercenaries in charge of revamped army

Uganda and Rwanda sending in reinforcements to meet the counter-offensive.

This new, stronger line from some Western governments contrasts with the feelings of most ordinary Zaireans. At first they demonstrated against Mr Kabila, who was denounced as a Rwandan puppet by the

Mobutu regime. But now they mostly believe the rebel movement is homegrown and that Mr Kabila is a national hero.

But then the West has made an art form of being out of step with popular feeling in Zaire. For years it propped up the Mobutu regime, sending in troops to crush popular revolts, although it was obvious that the dictator was bleeding the former Belgian colony dry.

Today Zaire has no infrastructure. Entire regions are virtually autonomous tributaries or payments to Kinshasa are made simply to keep Mr Mobutu's mafia at bay. The people are among the poorest in the world. Yet the West still chooses to put its faith in the Prime Minister, Kengo wa Dondo, an unpopular figure since the ailing President engineered his election during a brief visit home from France, where he is being treated for cancer.

"When the state is collapsing you hang on to institutions that still exist," another diplomat explained. But Mukendi Malumba, chief adviser to the main opposition leader, Etienne Tshisekedi, says the West is naive to think Kengo wa Dondo will ever hold fair elections.

Tense times have resulted in diplomatic feuds. Dan Simpson, the US ambassador to Zaire, recently accused France of neo-colonialism in Africa. The French, who to their shame supported the Rwandan Hutu regime which committed the 1994 genocide, claim the US supported the Tutsi-led Rwandan government in its surrogate aggression against Zaire.

The row was smoothed over during diplomatic discussions in Paris two weeks ago. The overriding common interest, it was agreed, was to maintain the existing borders. These were drawn up at the 1878 Berlin con-

ference, when Europe carved up Africa, ignoring the existing tribal and language groups.

Richard Cornwall, of the Africa Institute of South Africa, compares the Zairean state to blanchmange. "You try to grab but there is really nothing there," he says. "But the fiction of the state has to be maintained, or else a whole can of worms is opened and no one wants to deal with that."

One theory portrays the giant, tottering state of Zaire as a territorial buffet table at which the nine countries on its borders are feasting. Now that Rwanda's original aim, the neutralisation of the Hutu threat, has largely been achieved, it might be expected to withdraw.

In order to prevent regional chaos, the international community will be willing to sacrifice the refugees, human rights and the democratic aspirations of Zaire's people.

New UN chief facing old cash dilemma

David Usborne
New York

For Kofi Annan, the new Secretary-General of the United Nations, the visit to Washington last week was a giddy round of receptions, audiences and intense media attention. President Bill Clinton received him in the Oval Office and Senator Jesse Helms, the UN's curmudgeonly nemesis, had some kind words.

To an extent, the visit must be judged a success. Mr Annan has put his reputation on the line promising to propose a comprehensive package of UN reforms by the summer. He has also fully engaged Washington on its responsibility to deliver the other side of the bargain: to pay up its back dues to the UN, worth over \$1.3bn, and thus relieve the organisation's financial crisis.

That this is going to be a hard trick to pull off is evident. But as Mr Annan flew back to headquarters last Friday he must have pondered that something worse than failure might happen - that the demands coming from Capitol Hill may ignite months of dangerous argument between the United States on the one hand and the rest of the UN on the other, with him, all reasonable, in the middle.

For example: Mr Annan suggested during a speech to the National Press Club in Washington last Friday that the US might be allowed to lower its long-standing 25-per cent share of the regular UN budget. If it could persuade other member states to acquiesce, "The formula is not sacrosanct," he intoned. "The United States can negotiate a lower rate for itself." That came only a day after Mr Helms, dawdling with reporters outside the White House, had mused about those "European countries that are so critical about us". Perhaps, he said, it was time "we looked at what they contribute".

Mr Annan conceded another point to Mr Helms. The senator is promising to table draft legislation on the Hill as early as next week laying down what he called "benchmarks" of reform that the UN will have to meet before Congress will consider relinquishing monies to pay back its UN arrears. And Mr Annan has agreed to receive staff members from the senator's office in New York this week to discuss what the legislation might look like.

Defensive UN officials insisted that Mr Annan has little choice but to show accommodation to the US, Mr Clinton, they said, urged Mr Annan to make friends with as many people as possible on Capitol Hill. After all, it is the members of Congress who are refusing to pay the UN. The administration is fully aware of the damage being done to its influence in the UN.

Mr Annan's overtures are certain, however, to make some of the 184 UN members nervous, if not livid. The US, after all, does have a treaty obligation to pay its dues on time. Why, other countries will wonder, the special treatment for Washington? Mr Annan's agreement to see staff from Senator Helms's office came only hours after he told an editorial board of the *Washington Post* that he would not deal directly with officials from member state parliaments, only with national missions established in New York, he said.

The idea of "benchmarks" will not sit well with any other state, Britain and France among them. For benchmarks read conditions - conditions on fulfilling a treaty requirement. Questioned in a corridor of the Senate last Thursday, a UN staff member described the Helms demands as being "sticking" for Mr Annan and that he was going to have to walk "a fine line". Indeed,

with HK

New Delhi smokers coughing mad as city boss bans their fix

Jan McGirk
New Delhi

Smokers in New Delhi are having a collective nicotine fit. Ever since the Indian capital's chief minister, Shashi Singh Verma, made it his New Year's resolution officially to ban tobacco in public, smokers have been savouring their last legal puffs at the office and plotting how they can get through a normal day without lighting up in view. The ban started yesterday, and violators risk paying up to a 500 rupee (£10) fine, equivalent to a week's average wage, if they are caught.

Elderly men, who often while away the winter afternoons by pulling their rope beds into a patch of sun in the alley and passing around a hookah, accosted Mr Verma in anger to demand that their tradition be respected. But he was adamant: no hookahs, no hubble-bubbles, no *bidis* (cheap leaf-wrapped smokes), no pipes - absolutely no nasty nicotine habit can be indulged within the city limits, except in private.

Pessimists predicted productivity would decline as addicts slipped out for their fix. From now, Delhi's smokers

must stub out their cigarettes in offices, hospitals, cinemas, restaurants, theatres, schools, stadiums, hotels, banquet halls, railway stations, airports, and all public transport. Jaded smokers say they'll ignore the ban and, if caught, cough up a small bribe, less than the fine. A few smokers, mainly women who have been trying to quit, welcomed the laws.

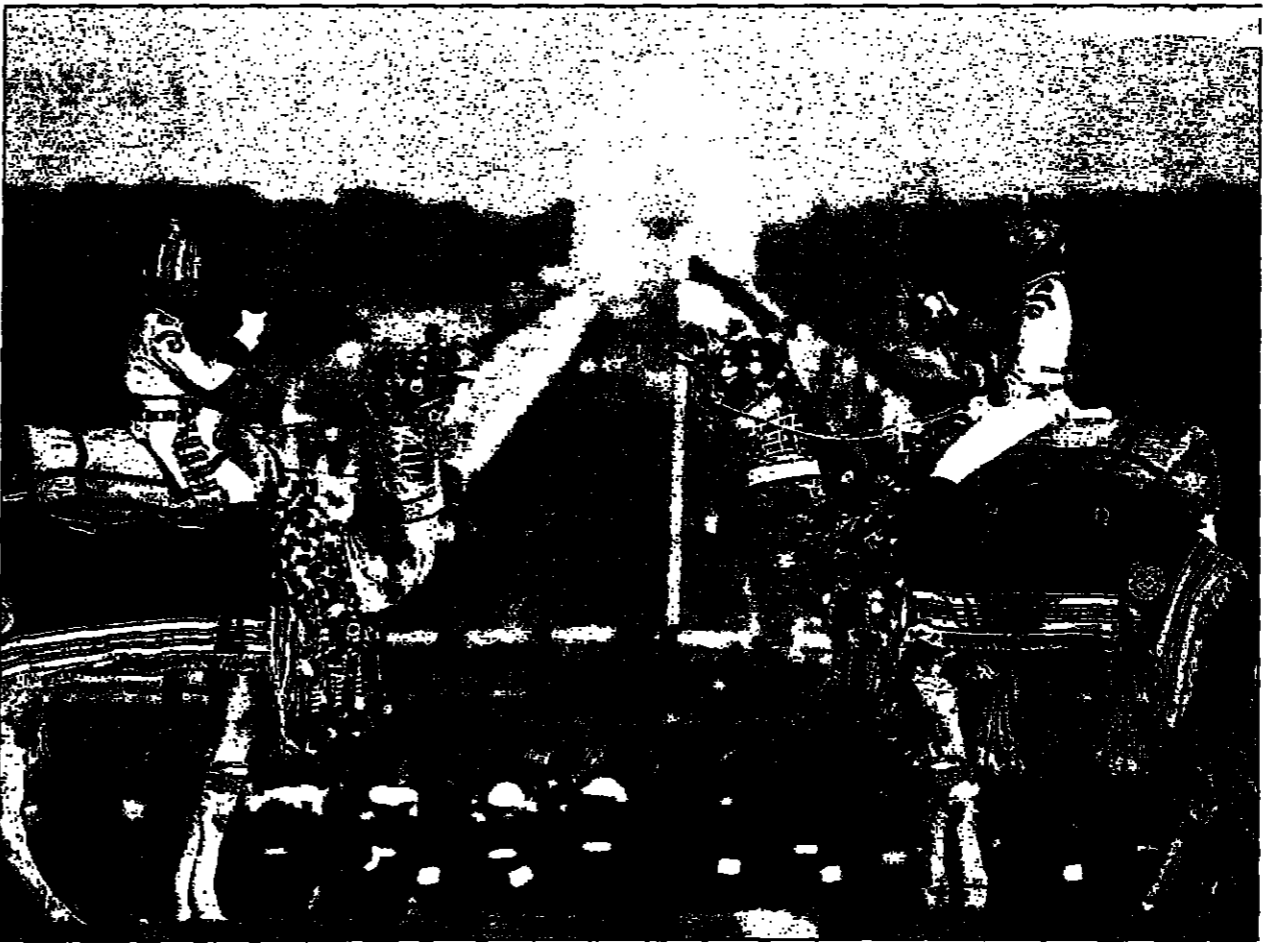
Thronging the route yesterday to watch the Republic Day procession march towards the arch of India Gate seemed more jittery than usual. "Fifty years of freedom? Not really," said a business student. Ashwin Chandok. "Today we can't even smoke outside. Well, they've just lost my vote."

Many residents ridicule the law, especially after environmentalists said last month that simply breathing the air of New Delhi was the rough equivalent of smoking 12 cigarettes a day. While the Health Minister, Harsh Vardhan, said at least 30 per cent of his budget went for treating smoking-related diseases, and that nearly 1 million deaths across India were linked to tobacco, smokers said their contribution to overall air pollution in New Delhi must be

laughably small. Doctors at Delhi University blamed the poisoned air, which makes the number of respiratory patients 12 times higher than the national average, and said almost a third of New Delhi citizens suffer from some sort of respiratory complaint. At least 7,500 deaths in New Delhi each year are attributed to pollution.

"It's absurd to ape the West and ban cigarettes here," said Farah Singh, a chain-smoking air stewardess. "You go to New York and it looks like there is some invasion of afternoon streetwalkers, until you discover that it's just the secretaries hanging around outside to smoke during their coffee breaks. India's not like that. With all of Delhi's public place because so many people live in the streets, this ban is impossible to enforce."

Kiran Bedi, a former inspector-general of prisons, tended to agree. She outlawed tobacco three years ago at New Delhi's Tihar jail to try to improve health conditions, but found the 8,000 inmates would go to any lengths for a cigarette. "They resented my no-smoking rule terribly, although it was the best thing for them. They



Getting the hump: Rehearsals for the Republic Day parade, which is now a no-smoking event

Photograph: Reuters

craved tobacco and would risk severe punishment for a single cigarette. Criminals would refer to tobacco as 'the beloved'.

"I feared they might riot before they would comply with my new health regulations." Fires broke out when smokers rigged the prison wiring to light their illicit cigarettes after Ms Bedi

banned matches as well. An anti-smoking campaign is about to be launched by volunteer agencies, but few expect it to make any real headway. Meanwhile, local environmentalists are concerned about the lack of enforcement of anti-pollution legislation already on the books. This has failed to curb an in-

crease in New Delhi's vehicular pollution or hazardous industrial wastes. Loopholes abound: tens of thousands of kerosene-powered generators kick in daily during frequent power failures and must certainly pollute the air just as much as the ancient two-stroke engines on motor rickshaws or

the dung fires that help warm the pavement-dwellers.

For now, the only legal smokers in New Delhi who can light up in public are sadhus, the wandering Hindu mystics who are allowed to pass their hashish-filled *chillum*s with impunity. This week, they are the envy of the strung-out smokers.

Scandal of the street children that shames Kenya

Homeless teenagers living in fear of brutal treatment meted out by authorities, writes David Orr in Nairobi

Joseph Mwangi and his teenage friends are terrified of being arrested by the police. Their crime is to live rough on the streets of the Kenyan capital, Nairobi. Mostly they are picked up in ones and twos but, occasionally, there is a full-scale swoop. There was one the other day but everyone in Joseph's group managed to escape. They know what fate awaits them if they are caught and charged with vagrancy.

So far, Joseph, aged 17, has spent only one period in detention but he says it was the worst experience of his life. Last year, he was sent to the capital's notorious Industrial Area Remand Prison pending investigation of his case.

By the time he was released two and a half months later, he had suffered serious mental and physical abuse.

It is not rare for juveniles to be sent to adult remand prisons in Kenya.

During their time in detention, Joseph and the three other boys with him - all in their early teens - were regularly beaten by the other inmates. So overcrowded were the cells, they had to sleep on a latrine floor covered in human waste.

"In the remand prison, the adults steal rations from the younger ones," says Joseph, seated under a tree in Uhuru

Park, central Nairobi. "To get it back, they are forced to do sexual things with them. Adults rape the younger ones and if you refuse you're beaten."

Joseph belongs to a group of more than 30 street kids known as the Cathedral Children. Each lunchtime they gather in the park in front of All Saint's Cathedral. The Anglican pastors give them food, their only solid meal of the day.

There are more than 10,000 street children in Nairobi alone. Most of them seem to come from poor, single-parent families. However, it is not just economic factors which push

them on to the streets. The Cathedral Children, who mostly belong to the majority Kikuyu community, became homeless in 1992 after clashes in central Kenya between their people and warriors from President Daniel arap Moi's Kalenjin tribe.

In September of last year, soon after Joseph was released from the remand prison, a street kid known as Kajunia was shot dead by a police reservist in Uhuru Park. Kajunia was Joseph's best friend.

Near the spot where the Cathedral Children wait for their daily hand-out runs a foul open sewer. According to

Joseph, Kajunia was whipped as he emerged from the sewer where he had gone to relieve himself. Then he was shot at point-blank range in the throat.

"The *afande* just fired his gun straight at Kajunia," says Joseph, using the Swahili term of respect for a policeman.

"He fell down in the water with his hands still raised in surrender. Then the *afande* shot on him and walked away. I was also beaten but I managed to escape. The *afande* is still around. He still comes after us and tries to beat us."

Joseph's testimony will feature in a forthcoming report on

Kenya's street children by the New York-based human rights organisation, Human Rights Watch.

The report, which follows an inquiry into the juvenile justice system and police violence against street children, is likely to prove a damning indictment of institutionalised abuse of young people in Kenya.

"The police seem to think that all street children are thieves," says Elizabeth Oyugi of African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect.

"The children don't stand a

chance, they're condemned from the start. Most of them complain of having been beaten by the police."

The network estimates that as many as 120 street children appear before Nairobi's juvenile court each week. For boys the charge is usually vagrancy, for girls loitering with intent. Children who plead not guilty are remanded in custody.

"In court they're treated like criminals," says Mrs Oyugi. "The justice system is extremely intimidating. They don't get a lawyer to explain to them what's happening."

"Children of 16 and even

younger are being sent to the Industrial Area Remand Prison which is for adults. The conditions there are appalling, mainly because of overcrowding and inadequate rations."

According to recent estimates, as many as five people a day are dying of disease in the prison. When questioned about conditions in Kenyan prisons, the former home affairs minister, Francis Lotodo, replied: "A prison is not a hotel."

It is only through the reports of former inmates like Joseph Mwangi that it is possible to get information on Kenya's prison conditions. Human rights organisations, journalists and lawyers have been refused free access to the prisons.

significant shorts

Czech Republic in line to join Nato, Havel says

The Czech Republic might be invited this summer to join Nato, President Vaclav Havel said yesterday. "Everything suggests that certain countries... including the Czech Republic... might be directly invited at the summer summit in Madrid, and the process of admitting new Nato members would thus be launched," he said during a radio broadcast. His remarks followed a meeting with the German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, who was in Prague to sign a declaration on Czech-German reconciliation last Tuesday. **Reuter - Prague**

Arson suspected in karaoke fire

Fire inspectors on Sunday sifted through the debris at a Hong Kong karaoke club gutted in a fire which killed 15 people, and police said they were investigating a possible organised crime link to what appeared to be an arson attack. Initial reports said the fire may have been started by a petrol bomb tossed early on Saturday on to the first-floor stairway of the Top One Karaoke Bar in the Tsui Sha Tsui district of the Kowloon peninsula. **Reuter - Hong Kong**

Taliban steps up expulsions

Afghanistan's Taliban militia is continuing to expel civilians from the strategic Gulbahaar district north of the capital Kabul to prevent any uprising, a Taliban commander and civilians said on Sunday. "We have told people to leave the area because they pass on military information to our opposition and to prevent any kind of revolt against our Taliban brothers," the militia's frontline commander, Mir Ahmad, said. **Reuter - Gulbahaar**

Madagascar cyclone kills 6

A cyclone that hit Madagascar has left at least 6 people dead, another hundred missing and 30,000 homeless, the Interior Ministry said yesterday. **Antananarivo - AP**

Peru rebels release hostage

Marxist rebels holding hostages in the Japanese ambassador's residence in Lima freed General Jose Rivas Rodriguez, a deputy chief in the Peruvian national police, early yesterday. The sick officer was wheeled out of the compound on a hospital trolley flanked by Red Cross officials and Bishop Juan Luis Cipriani. **Reuters - Lima**

Accidental death of an anarchist comes back to scandalise Italy

Andrew Gumbel
Rome

It was a crime that defined a generation. The shooting of police commissioner Luigi Calabresi in Milan on 17 May 1972 took place against an extraordinary backdrop of ideological struggle and murky violence that brought Italy to the brink of democratic collapse. The affair soured the innocence of the 1968 student uprisings, prefigured the terrorism of the Red Brigades and gave the first hint of a sinister collusion between the Italian state and various criminal underworlds.

Extraordinarily, it is also an issue that has roared back to life in the past week. Nearly a quarter of a century after the fact, and following seven trials and appeal hearings, three men have been sentenced for ordering and carrying out the killing of a man who was once the most hated policeman in Italy.

Italy's High Court ruled last Wednesday that Adriano Sofri, Giorgio Pietrostefani and Ovidio Bompressi - all of them former members of a prominent left-wing agitprop group called Lotta Continua - were to be denied any possibility of further appeal and sent to prison for 22 years apiece. The problem is that almost nobody in Italy believes them to be guilty, and even fewer believe they should

be made to pay for the follies of an era that by now is almost a whole generation in the past.

It has been an astonishing spectacle, as political parties on all sides have tried to use the case for their own campaigning purposes and a beleaguered judiciary has lamely sought to defend a case with more holes than an Emmental cheese.

The original story will be familiar to anyone who saw Dario Fo's hit play *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*. In the winter of 1969 some shady right-wing organisations responded to a rash of mass industrial unrest with a series of bombings, including an attack on a bank in Piazza Fontana, Milan, that killed 16 people and injured nearly 100.

We now know that the bombings were part of a deliberate "strategy of tension", orchestrated by some sections of the political establishment in collusion with the secret services to counter the rise of the New Left in 1968 and scare voters away from the Communist Party. At the time, though, it was far from clear who was responsible for the attacks, and a massive disinformation campaign was launched to pin the blame on left-wing anarchists and groups such as Lotta Continua. One anarchist, Pino Finelli, was detained without due legal process for three days at the central police station in Milan, at the end



The murder scene: Commissioner Calabresi was shot dead outside his flat in Milan in May 1972

Photograph: UPI

of which he fell to his death from the window of Commissioner Calabresi's fourth-floor office. At first it was asserted he had committed suicide, then that he accidentally fell while smoking. Of course nobody ever believed such preposterous assertions. Lotta Continua (the name

means Continuous Struggle) launched a vicious counter-campaign accusing Calabresi and his colleagues of torturing and murdering Finelli before throwing him out of the window. Unfortunately they had not a shred of proof, and before long the case landed in the courts where the judiciary dutifully fudged it and - years later, when the fuss had died down - shelved it altogether.

When Calabresi was shot outside his home in broad daylight, suspicion immediately fell on Lotta Continua but no case could ever be made against any of the organisation's members who were arrested sporadically over the next few years. By the turn of the 1980s the crime had turned into yet another unsolved Italian mystery, the authorities gave up hope of ever bringing the commissioner's assailants to book.

But then, out of the blue, something very odd happened. In the summer of 1988, a petty crook and one-time Lotta Continua member, Leonardo Marino, turned himself in to the police saying he had taken part in Calabresi's murder. The hit-man had been Ovidio Bompressi, he claimed, and the men who had approached him to take part were Sofri and Pietrostefani - leader and deputy leader of the now long-defunct Lotta Continua.

Marino's confession struck like a bombshell, not least because Sofri and Pietrostefani had become highly respected figures in their respective chosen fields of journalism and social work. But as the case unfolded, it also started to look

highly suspect, as Marino's testimony betrayed more and more inconsistencies and became bogged down in ever more tortuous contradictions.

He claimed to have driven the getaway car, but slipped up on details such as the colour of the vehicle and the route he

much else in this murky affair, has no evidence to support it.

Much of Italy has watched aghast as successive court hearings have rubber-stamped Marino's version of events and dismissed the credibility of other evidence in surreal fashion (one witness who said he saw a woman driving the getaway car was disregarded on the grounds that he was colour-blind).

The final High Court verdict has sparked a wave of national revulsion including sentiments of scarcely concealed contempt from government ministers. Only the far-right National Alliance came out in praise of the ruling.

The left sees the affair as a continuation of an ideological struggle that should by rights have subsided along with the end of the Cold War, while the followers of Silvio Berlusconi and his centre-right party Forza Italia have used the case as another stick with which to beat the Italian judiciary. Marino's confession, they argue, is exactly the sort of unreliable evidence used to nail politicians and businessmen during the anti-corruption wave of the early 1990s and has parallels, they say, in the various criminal cases at present being brought against Mr Berlusconi himself.

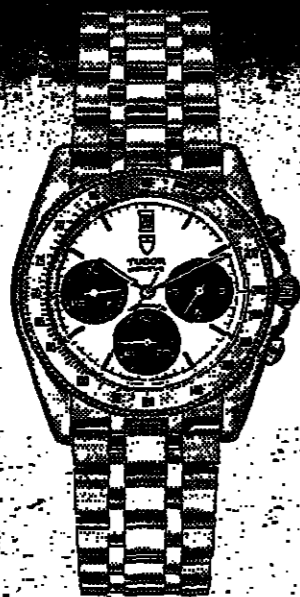
As for the defendants, Sofri and Bompressi were escorted to jail this weekend and Pietrostefani, who lives in Paris, announced he would be returning to Italy shortly to share their fate. Their only hope now is a presidential pardon - rare in Italy, but something that in the present climate of indignation they may yet be granted.



Calabresi: Once the most hated policeman in Italy

took away from the scene of the crime. Two eye-witnesses said the driver had been a woman, and others gave an account of how the murderer got in and out of the car that jarred completely with Marino's version. Perhaps most seriously, Marino failed to mention - until his own parish priest inadvertently revealed it in court - that he had spent three weeks in unrecorded talks with the police before beginning his formal deposition. Friends of Sofri and Pietrostefani have suspected ever since that a plot was hatched with the police to take belated revenge on the Lotta Continua leadership, a theory that is widely believed but which, like so

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SUNALLIANCE

But who will deliver a real choice of schools?

New Labour: old school tie. The Prime Minister's crude and personal attack on Tony Blair is a better guide to the election battle over education than any waffle about "super-schools" which may emerge from today's all-day Cabinet thrash on the Tory manifesto. The Government purports to be concerned with parental choice and standards, but the party's instincts are altogether cruder. In the election campaign we will be presented with Honest John from Brixton, who wants educational opportunity for all, against a Labour leader who enjoyed the benefits of an elite education himself, but who wants to confine them to a hypocritical, middle-class minority.

This plays on some of Labour's more visible inconsistencies. But will it work? We hope not, because it is a debased distraction from the real issues. And we do not believe that it will, because the dissonances in Mr Major's position are too deafening.

First, he hated school himself and left at the age of 15 without an O-level to his name. If he is to use his own humble origins as a model, his manifesto should propose correspondence courses in banking for all.

Secondly, he sent his son and daughter to private schools, which is rather more relevant than where either he or Mr Blair went to school themselves. Mr Blair's choice of school for his sons is controversial only in relation to Labour

policy; in relation to responsibility for the state schools used by nine-tenths of the population, Mr Blair and his colleagues are rather better placed to preach about "opportunity for all".

So let us hope that the education debate in this election will not be about mites, beams and intermediate-sized pieces of wood in the eyes of politicians. Unfortunately, today's discussions on the Tory manifesto seem unlikely to take us further forward.

Gillian Shephard's plan for "super schools" is simply an old, unfulfilled Tory pledge dressed up, that popular schools ought to be able to expand. No one has an ideological objection to this, but there are practical difficulties in allocating more money to successful schools and taking it away from sinking ones.

Her other suggestion for the manifesto – the present draft is a rather thin document, if this is any guide – is to get round the problem of parents who persistently vote against schools opting out of local council control. She wants to copy Labour's plan for "foundation" schools, a half-way house between autonomy and direct rule by education authorities.

This should prompt us to ask more fundamental questions. The truth is that both the Conservatives and Labour are incoherent on the subject of parental choice. The Tories have little to say to the parents of children who are likely to be rejected in a more selective system, while Labour has a strangled message for

parents whose children currently enjoy the benefits of partial selection. These parents happen to include Mr Blair himself, Harriet Harman and many of the middle-class voters of Wirral South (by-election pending) whose children go to its two grammar schools.

Both parties are haunted by ghosts. Mrs Shephard has boneheaded traditionalists looming over her shoulder, who simply will not accept that a return to the 11-plus would be divisive and unpopular. Meanwhile, David Blunkett, her Labour shadow, is haunted by Graham Lane. Mr Lane may not be well known, but we all recognise him

nevertheless. He is chairman of the metropolitan councils' education committee. He is the embodiment of Hattersleyism, the belief that the Local Education Authority knows best. And he has been frightening *Daily Mail* and *Sunday Times* readers by threatening to end selection in the 161 state schools which still practise it.

Hence Mr Blunkett's statement yesterday that he would veto plans by local councils to ballot parents on the future of grammar schools. If Labour wins the election, that should keep the Tory switchers of the leafy Wirral happy.

But it does not resolve the dilemma

of parental choice. By the exercise of millions of parental choices (including the choice of where to buy a house) over the years, this country's schools are being more and more polarised into good and bad. This is starkly revealed in the findings of the Social Market Foundation study which we report on page 1 today. The Government is hoist by its own league tables. Parental choice is clearly an important principle in a free society, but it cannot be a policy for raising standards across the board.

It is to the question of raising standards for the middle and the bottom of the range of schools that our politicians should speak and act. And it is here that this newspaper gives Mr Blunkett the edge over Mrs Shephard, because she has too often been bogged down – as today – in administrative quagmires.

We accept that it may be easier to sound constructive about standards in opposition than in government, but equally the Conservatives simply have to accept responsibility for the present state of our education system. Of course, it should not be forgotten that most parents are broadly satisfied with their children's own schools, but there can be no doubt that the system as a whole has underperformed, is underperforming and must do better.

That is why, with all parties claiming to put education at the top of their list, only the Liberal Democrats can be credited with meaning what they say.

"Will the parties spend more on schools?" was one of the eight key election questions which we asked at the beginning of this month. Only Paddy Ashdown has answered it. Mr Blair's promise to shift resources from social security to education may be better than a poke in the eye, but it cannot sustain "education, education and education" as the three priorities of a Labour government. From the Conservatives, however, all we have is a slap in the face with the old school tie.

The winged god who got the boot

So farewell then, Mercury. Clever, Saren't they, these marketing people? Obvious, really, that everyone thought Mercury was a winged god and a planet, and had never heard of the telephone company. And as for the new brand name, "Cable & Wireless Communications", now that has a ring to it! Just make sure you hit the Cable & Wireless Communications button on the fax before you send those 200 pages to Kuala Lumpur, Dave. You can almost hear the snappy dialogue of the new television adverts. Still, we hope they don't skimp on changing the logos. There's nothing quite so sad as a new logo that costs less than £50m.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Oxford dons call for peace in East Timor

Sir: East Timor is one half of an island in the easternmost part of the Indonesian archipelago. Originally a Portuguese colony, it was invaded by Indonesia on 7 December 1975 to prevent its independence under the left-leaning East Timorese Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (Fretilin), and has since witnessed one of the worst genocides in post-war history with an estimated 200,000 of its original 700,000 population being wiped out by war, famine and disease, equivalent to the United Kingdom losing the entire population of Greater London and the home counties following a nuclear attack.

Two decades of military occupation, "transmigration", and the imposition of Indonesian language and culture have resulted in what the East Timorese Council of Priests has termed a form of "ethnocide". In their words: "What we are witnessing in East Timor is an upheaval of gigantic and tragic proportions... To kill the culture is to kill the people."

Thanks to massive Western support, Indonesia has been able to act with impunity: torture, arbitrary arrests, imprisonment without trial, "disappearances" and massacres have been common, one of the most notorious being that at the Santa Cruz cemetery just outside Dili on 12 November 1991, when Indonesian troops fired on mourners protesting at the death of an East Timorese youth, killing over 250. In November 1992, the chief resistance leader, Xanana Gusmão, East Timor's Nelson Mandela, was arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment.

The recent award of the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize to the Bishop of East Timor, Mgr Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, and the principal foreign affairs spokesman of the resistance, José Ramos Horta, has drawn renewed international attention to East Timor.

At a time when the 30-year-old Suharto regime in Jakarta is confronting the problem of succession, the East Timor issue is being pushed back to haunt the Indonesian generals. No longer a mere "pebble in one's shoe" as the Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas once described it, East Timor has become a veritable boulder, threatening to split Indonesia itself apart.

Cognisant of the United Kingdom's long-standing ties with Indonesia, ties which go back to the very inception of the Republic in August 1945, we call on the British government to assist the search for peace in East Timor and the process of regime change in Indonesia itself by embarking on an urgent review of HMG's sales of sophisticated weaponry to the Indonesian Government.

High on this list of weapons are the latest batch of 16 British Aerospace (BAe) Hawk ground attack/trainer aircraft, which have recently been licensed for export to Indonesia and for which no reliable guarantees have yet been received regarding the prohibition of their use against civilian targets in East Timor.

As such a crucial moment in the modern history of Indonesia, when every effort is being made, under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General, to find a solution to the long-running issue of East Timor, we believe that the cause of peace can be best served by imposing a moratorium on further arms sales



Indian children like vegetables

Sir: Professor Hastings' call for a change in the "cultural position" of vegetables ("... but the carrots may taste of prawn cocktail", 22 January) is more easily said than done, given the reference to "gruesome greens" in your leading article.

There would have to be a seismic shift in British culinary habits and attitudes to vegetables, to bring about the view that a good meal should consist of an assortment of vegetables and lentils with some meat in addition.

In India, which is probably the only country in the world that offers a highly evolved and self-sufficient vegetarian cuisine, children are rarely averse to vegetables and the large variety of greens are never "gruesome". Each vegetable (quite a few unheard of in Britain) is prized for its distinct flavour and other properties and would not be subjected to brutal boiling, except for potatoes and other root vegetables. Vegetables should be slowly braised and flavoured with a few herbs and/or whole spices to make a delicious dish.

Would the average Briton believe that a vegetable tasted different according to whether it had been chopped, sliced, diced, cubed, shredded, puréed or left whole in cooking? Or that there is sheer poetry in the stacks of succulent vegetables on offer at an early morning vegetable market in India?

Vegetables deserve tenderness. MALATHY SITARAM Swindon, Wiltshire

Royal yacht costs less than Clinton

Sir: Our American correspondent Elizabeth Clarke (letter, 25 January) is dumbfounded that £60m should be spent on a royal yacht. Well, there are some of us here who are pretty surprised that her countrymen spend about £500m on last year's presidential campaign.

Some years ago it was reported that it cost more to keep the presidential jet, Air Force One, in service for a year, than the cost of the entire British monarchy for the same period. There must be causes in the United States on which this money could be better spent.

DONALD FOREMAN Secretary, The Constitutional Monarchy Association London, E4

Sir: So we're buying a boat! At £60m to build, plus millions in running costs, it will apparently be good for jobs, create a source of national pride and have many spin-off benefits (report, 23 January). Cutting nearly half a billion pounds from government spending on housing in the last budget was "sound financial management". I thought that a better housed nation was a healthier and more secure one. Perhaps I'm missing something. BILL PAYNE Chartered Institute of Housing Coventry

Sir: Since 1979 we have been led to believe that "privatisation" is central to Tory party beliefs. Evidently, in the matter of the monarchy ("Taxpayers buy the Queen a new yacht", 23 January), the Tory party believes in "nationalisation" – state subsidy of public services. Party of principle? STEWART WILLS Bowdon, Cheshire

Cash crops cause water crisis

Sir: In your important front-page lead "World is running out of water" (25 January), you end by suggesting that global water shortages result from the need to feed a fast-growing world population. Yet it won't have escaped readers' notice that the crop you previously referred to is not a food at all, but Egyptian cotton.

The world's agribusiness conglomerates would like us to believe that the root problem is one of producing food for the hungry. However, it is cash-cropping that causes the greatest hardship and ecological damage.

Charities such as Oxfam, Christian Aid, Cafod and Save have long united in condemning this pernicious practice, whereby poor countries cut down forests and divert precious water resources to grow cash crops such as coffee, tobacco, sugar or chocolate, which they sell on the world market for a pittance.

When we made our BBC2 documentary *Sex, Drugs and Dinner*, coffee farmers in the Dominican Republic showed us how they were being forced by low prices to turn to new higher-yield coffee plants which demanded more water and light – ie yet more deforestation and costly irrigation. It's an oft-quoted statistic that half the children in Ghana are starving, and half the land is growing chocolate for export to us. As you point out, Egypt is already a

heavy importer of foodstuffs and it is cash-cropping, a con-trick which promises riches and delivers hunger and destruction. CHARLIE HARRIS Footloose Films London NW3

Sir: Your report "World is running out of water" (25 January) points out that farming consumes most of the water used by humanity. This is one of the many environmental reasons to end livestock farming and eat a largely vegan diet.

In the West it takes, on average, 25 gallons of water to produce a pound of wheat, but 2,500 gallons to produce a pound of meat (Joni Seager, *The State of the Environment Atlas*, Penguin Books, 1995). Livestock farming is also one of the biggest sources of water pollution.

RICHARD MOUNTFORD Birmingham

Sir: If the world is running out of water, should it be in private control? REG HANSELL Shepherdswell, Kent

Labour lesson

Sir: I wonder if Tony Blair is aware of the long-term damage being done to his party by his current policies? In my son's primary school there is a "Demon Eyes" poster and, underneath the slogan "New Labour, More Homework", MICK WRIGHT Bury, Greater Manchester

Scottish model for Brussels

Sir: Many of us in north Britain smile at the current hysteria south of the Tweed.

"Loss of sovereignty", "arrogant centralisation", "kowtowing to foreigners" – we've heard it all before. We recall the fuss kicked up by our Tories around 1707 against union with that (then) overwhelming economic competitor England. It was similarly stoked by wounded vanity, worthy patriotism, and threatened sinecures. But the economic world was shrinking in 1707; their businessmen knew that and they were dragged, kicking and screaming and heavily bribed, into what soon became their paradise. A blessed Union whose dissolution, as Mr Major stoutly maintains, is now "unthinkable".

Today another quantum step in global shrinkage confronts Tories north and south and another inevitable Union looms. Yet, the same reflexes, the same squeals. Have they not learnt? That first Union was so clearly successful in promoting prosperity and freedom from war – why all the fuss about extending these benefits?

The reason seems equally clear. That 1707 Union was, in practical terms, a simple incorporation, a takeover. Not with a subservient parliament, but with no parliament, no separate currency, no separate taxation, no defence forces. Nothing left to worry about. But Brussels seems to envisage at best only a sort of federal union.

Fox hunts akin to witch-burning

Sir: Richard D North's attempt to defend fox-hunting, which he admits is "irrational" (23 January), in no way lessens my objections to this so-called sport. No civilised society should condone anything which deliberately promotes delight in death, be it human or animal. I recognise that some wild birds have to be culled and that farmers have the right to protect their stock from predators, but this should be done professionally by a cold-eyed, licensed farmer or marksman.

Like many others, I find the sight of huntsmen sipping from the stirrup cup before setting off, giving gleeful shouts as they pursue a lone, defenceless animal, often attending a merry hunt ball afterwards, utterly repulsive. It is akin to the primitive instincts which made a ghoulish public flock to the burning of witches and public hangings. BRIAN ROBERTS Frome, Somerset

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, and include a daytime telephone number.

Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk.

E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

essay

Here's how, Tony

Gerald Kaufman, former Labour minister under Wilson, has some tips for Tony Blair and his would-be cabinet

Whitehall is busy. Civil servants are working flat out for two Cabinets. They are, with all proper conscientiousness, carrying out the duties assigned to them by John Major and his ministers. They are also preparing for the eventuality of a Labour victory in March, or April, or May. If Tony Blair and his team do take over, awaiting them will be the moment they walk into their offices will be Briefs for Incoming Ministers.

Civil servants have studied Labour policy documents intensively and will be acquainted with the contents of those documents more thoroughly than the very Labour politicians who wrote them – let alone the many more Labour politicians who were supposed to read them, but may just possibly not have done so. At an early meeting with civil servants after Labour won in 1974, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Harold Lever, noticed that several of those civil servants were brandishing copies of the Labour manifesto. This notoriously laid-back politician pleaded: "I've always wanted one of those. Can you get me one?"

Primed to the eyebrows, civil servants will be able to advise Labour ministers on how to be efficient administrators. They will be completely unquipped

to guide those ministers on how to be effective members of a successful administration. Whitehall mandarins are masters of the arcane of inter-departmental minutes and "submissions" – the quaint soubriquet for the documents that civil servants send to ministers rather than to one another.

They do not have the faintest idea of how to operate – let alone manipulate – the political process. Yet it is as politicians that Tony Blair's lot will be judged.

So let me offer a few handy rules for members of Labour's shadow administration, to cut out and paste on to the red boxes that they will soon proudly – indeed, let us make no bones about it, ostentatiously – be flaunting.

1 Beware the disease of Departmentalitis. As members of Labour's shadow front bench in opposition, you at present see each other all the time. Some of you even talk to one another. At any rate, you get the opportunity to do so. In government, ministers are split up and kept away from each other, each batch sequestered in a separate departmental building.

Unless extremely strong-minded, you may come to regard life in these buildings as the be-all and end-all of your existence. Yet, out there is the rest of the government and,



Yes, Prime Minister: Gerald Kaufman with Harold Wilson at the Labour Party conference in 1966

believe it or not, the real world. Ministers should understand that the success of their own department's line, in isolation, may not only not be the best for the government and the people, it may in fact be the worst.

One colleague in the Labour government, involved in a dispute with me over policy, demanded that we meet not in my department but in his, or at any rate on what he called "neutral ground". I pointed out that we were not participants in some armistice negotiation, but colleagues who should be co-operating for the common good. This idea, at first quite novel to him, eventually made sense; we came to a decision that was good for thousands of workers (and, incidentally, good for the Government).

2 Beware the disease of Ministerialitis. After 18 years of being an opposition dogbody, getting to be called "Minister" numerous times every day may give you ideas about your station. Being a minister is an honour, but it is an honour that has come your way fortuitously and

may equally fortuitously be taken away.

When John Parker, MP for Dagenham, became the first member of Clement Attlee's administration to be sacked, Parker had the temerity to ask Attlee why. Attlee, notably tactful, mumbled, "Not up to the job."

Being up to the job as a minister involves remembering that there is a whole universe that does not care (or even know) whether you are a minister or not – unless you actually do something which improves that world, however marginally, or unless, by being big-headed or incompetent, or both, you do something that infuriates the world.

3 Remember you are an MP. Quite near to your Department is the House of Commons, filled with hundreds of colleagues in your own party who believe, quite possibly rightly, that it is they and not you who should be the minister. Ted Leadbitter, MP for Hartlepool and nemesis of Anthony Blunt, was convinced that he rather than anyone else in the world ought to be Secretary of State for Defence. Frank Tomney, obscure (though not obscure enough) MP for Hammersmith, in the interstices of blackguarding homosexuals and demanding the death penalty, never forgave Harold Wilson for not making him Foreign Secretary.

So treat your MP colleagues courteously, and pay grave attention to what they say, even if it is nonsense. At night, as you glide by the taxi-stand in your ministerial limousine, stop and ask backbenchers if any of them are going your way. After all, they have stayed late to vote to sustain the government of

which you and, by perverse ill chance, not they, are a member.

4 Remember you are Labour. Some ministers believe that their appointment to office requires them to abandon anything so pretty as partisan considerations. Yet what was the point of your party winning the election, if not to offer something distinctively different from that of your rejected opponents? So remember that your party exists and should be headed (even if not invariably truckled to).

Spread the word about the Government's high qualities (and your own concomitant virtues) among the party membership in the constituencies. You will find them frequently sensible and sometimes possessing better ideas than your own. It was a group of party supporters, brought to meet me from Bristol by Dawn Primarolo, who gave me ideas for a Defence Diversification Agency to deal with the industrial consequences of disarmament.

5 Remember your constituents. They elect you. They can get rid of you. Do not take them for granted. One of my wisest parliamentary colleagues made the point succinctly: "You can be an MP without being a minister, but you can't be a minister without being an MP." One young fellow, appointed to junior ministerial office by Jim Callaghan, told his constituents that he would henceforth be seeing less of him. When the opportunity arose, at the very next election, they decided to see nothing of him at all and removed him from what had seemed to be a safe seat.

Returning from a ministerial

trip to the United States to attend a tenants' association meeting in Manchester, I was told by one of my forthright female constituents, "I saw you on TV gallivanting in America." She then added, supplying the ultimate accolade: "Still, I've got to say it, we do see you here."

6 Be boss. By this I do not mean that you should be dominating, swaggering, bullying. Such attitudes get you nowhere, jeopardise your civil servants' loyalty, and are demeaning. On the other hand, civil servants' advice is not gospel. It is the best that can be proffered by individuals who are clever and experienced but who may not necessarily know what will work or what will be politically acceptable.

Always listen to advice but do not necessarily follow it. Only bad ministers blame the Civil Service, because only bad ministers let themselves be dominated by the Civil Service. After Labour lost in 1979, one former junior minister whined that he had been forced to answer written parliamentary questions in a way he had not wanted to. I found this odd, since ministers have to sign all such answers. Who had gripped his hand while he signed, I wondered. Stephen Dorrell and Douglas Hogg got into such a mess about BSE because they listened to official advice without making a political judgement about the advice. John Major wrote me a partially untruthful letter on arms to Iraq – it featured in the Scott inquiry – not because he wanted to lie, but because he took at face value an official draft which was economical with the truth. As a minister you will certainly make lots of mistakes. It is better to

make your own mistakes than someone else's.

7 Never take no for an answer. The official machinery has the capability to stich ministers up. If you want to make a spending commitment and your own civil servants do not like it but cannot talk you out of it, they will be on like lightning to their counterparts in the Treasury. When you write to the Chief Secretary for authority for this expenditure, those Treasury counterparts will draft a letter for the Chief Secretary to sign turning you down.

Go and see him and try to talk him round. If he is adamant, take the matter to a Cabinet committee. Before the meeting, canvass every member of the committee. I am not talking theory here.

A few months ago I flew back from Edinburgh in the company of a Tory member of the National Heritage Select Committee aboard British Aerospace's 146 feeder-liner. I pointed out to him, smugly, that we were aboard that particular plane because of me. Officials both at my own Department of Industry and at the Treasury had assured me that this project, then embryonic, had no commercial future. Using the tactics recounted above, I nevertheless got approval and finance for it. The BAe 146 is now a winner, selling all over the world. I have been paid no commission.

8 Remember you are politically mortal. Believe it or not, even when you are riding on cloud nine after first being appointed, after you have scored a huge parliamentary debating success, after you have done well at question time (in

the Commons) or on *Question Time* on the BBC, the day will come when you will stop being a minister.

If you disregard some of my rules you may be forced to resign (David Willetts being a signal example). If your face does not fit, you may be sacked. This happened to Douglas Jay as President of the Board of Trade. Harold Wilson decided Jay should go and told him so in his considerate way. Next day, Jay telephoned Wilson and announced that he had decided he would prefer to stay; Wilson had to explain that things did not quite work this way.

9 However you go, do not be bitter. The Commons has too many MPs who are bitter because they were ousted from junior opposition frontbench posts; bitter because they were not appointed to ministerial office, however lowly; bitter because they did not get the government job they wanted; bitter because they did not become Prime Minister. It is tedious for their colleagues and sad for them. So, remember that you are still an MP, which in itself is a huge honour, not to be attained by thousands of aspirants in the forthcoming general election.

Value the moments of glory you enjoyed. Bore those around you, as long as they will tolerate listening, by retelling your experiences. When everyone you know slides away at the start of a sentence beginning "When I was a minister", find a compliant publisher and write a book. You might even call it, somewhat arrogantly, *How to be a Minister*.

Gerald Kaufman's book, *How to be a Minister*, is published on 3 February by Faber & Faber.

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Questions for Chris Evans? Start here

I am pleased to say that I have been able to hire, at enormous expense, the services of Chris Evans in writing today's column. Chris Evans is currently unemployed, so we feel that both sides will gain from this arrangement.

Today Mr Evans has agreed to kick off by answering some of the questions sent in by readers about showbiz and the media.

All yours, Chris, and thanks for agreeing to rescue this column!

Dear Chris Evans, I wonder if you can help me, in the light of your recent experiences?

I am at present Prime Minister of your country and under the rules of my contract I have to resign in a few months' time and supply for the job. I would like to get the job again, not particularly because I enjoy doing it, but because it is getting a bit late for me in life to get another decent job and this is the only thing I do well, if I could be said to be doing it well, and I certainly think I am.

However, if I fail to get the

job I would then be appointed Leader of the Opposition, but there is a very real danger that my supporters would come to see me as a bad luck charm and turf me out on my ears. Even worse, they might turf me upstairs into the House of Lords as a peer, only for the new Labour prime minister to abolish the House of Lords and me with it! Well, obviously it would be pretty humiliating for me to have to get shot in the back by the Tories – and the Tories are pretty good at getting rid of leaders when they are past their has-been date, witness In Thatcher and Nicholas Scott etc – and as you are an expert in being hired and fired, I wonder what advice you might give me? If I fail to retain my job as PM, should I go before I am pushed, as you did? Should I stay on as Tory leader, but ask for Fridays off? Can you help?

Chris Evans writes: No. Piss off. Next please.

Dear Chris Evans, I would welcome your advice on a long-term contract I once ill-advisedly entered into and now cannot get out of. The thing is, my name is Ted



Miles Kingston

Hughes (yes, I have a Welsh surname like you, though no Welsh accent – again like you) and being something of a brilliant poet I landed a job as Poet Laureate, a job which entails writing a set of verses on notable royal occasions. At the time I thought it would be a doddle to turn out the occasional bit of doggerel every time the Queen Mum lasted another 10 years, but it has turned out to be a real grind. I ran out of ideas years ago and still I have to go on doing it. It's not as if the money is very good – I get 40

gold sovereigns a year and a but of malmsey, and my agent takes 10 per cent of that, which doesn't leave much.

At the moment I am working on a short poem about the phasing out of the Royal Yacht 'Britannia', welcoming the new royal yacht which the Government has announced, but now I have learnt that the Labour Party may refuse to build a new one if elected, which is going to make my poem look pretty stupid. My feeling now is that I should jack the job in, even if I have to buy myself out. What do you think I should do?

Chris Evans writes: Get stuffed. Next!

Dear Chris Evans, I wonder if you can help me? My name is Peter Stringfellow, and I run the most successful club in the history of the world. Twenty years ago I was unknown. Now I run the most successful club in the history of the world. This proves several things, including that it is quite possible for a young fellow like me to come from nothing with a stupid name like Stringfellow and end up

running the most successful club in the world.

There are several perks to the job, including pulling lots of lovely birds, but one of the oddest perks is getting on TV – I mean, I am invited on to chat shows, and quiz shows such as 'Have I Got News for You?' and really quite classy stuff like that, where you are expected to make jokes and offer opinions, and stuff like that etc. The only thing is, I don't really have many opinions or make jokes, so I don't really have much to talk about. Except running the most successful club in the world, which is all I know about. So I refer to that a lot. But I am still puzzled as to why people ask me on radio or TV. What's your suggestion?

Chris Evans writes: Bigger off. Which is exactly what I'm going to do. If I had known that writing a column for a Monday paper meant working on Sunday morning, I'd never have taken this job. Never again!

The charismatic but unpredictable Chris Evans will be back again soon. Or not, as the case may be.

The crude words used to woo ignorant voters

Does political advertising work? Those who study the black arts of advertising alchemy offer convincing evidence that it does.

Last week we learned that Sir James Goldsmith's Referendum Party had their contract abruptly terminated by Mori following an attempt to engineer more palatable opinion polling results. Mori's Bob Worcester thought it unethical, and that was that. But the story highlighted the catastrophic results so far of the Referendum Party - 0.5 per cent in the polls, despite all that advertising.

Ah, you might say, the solid British voter is not for sale. Yeomen of England are not swayed by the mere flim-flam of advertising, unlike American voters, of whom Barrow and Forbes bought large numbers. You would, alas, be wrong.

However, at first glance advertising sales in the six months to December might suggest, deceptively, that voters have not been swayed. The Referendum Party spent £2.2m on posters and press space, gaining only 0.5 per cent support. The Tories spent £0.5m, availing them might but a paltry 3.2 per cent. Labour has spent £1.1m, half-way between the other two, and they sit on a very comfortable 50 per cent. The Lib Dems have spent nothing - well, £1,601 - yet they have 13 per cent, which is 26 times more than Sir James.

Does that prove that advertising is a waste of money? None of us likes to feel that political advertising sways us, because it is so dumb. These days the rest of advertising is sophisticated, self-mocking, teasing; it breathes wit, irony and sassiness. Set side by side with it on billboards, political advertising looks crass.

But then, it is expected to work only on a very small number of people. Eighty per cent know how they will vote - not just at this, but at the next election. "It's aimed at those who are not in the least interested in politics and wish it would go away," says Bob Worcester, because those who switch off all television politics cannot escape posters. "If just 0.5 per cent of Tory voters at the last election had swung to the second party in their constituency, we would have had a hung parliament." This is something that terrified Tory MPs, facing eviction from marginal seats, are well aware of: just a few don't-know-don't-care floaters can tip the balance.

In 1992 there was a small swing to the Tories at the last moment. How much difference did advertising make? The Tories spent more in that week than all of Procter and Gamble and Unilever put together. The sheer weight of the Double Whammy had its effect.

Poster-selling has become extraordinarily sophisticated. The big companies offer their sites in highly refined packages: Maiden Outdoor, which sells to all the parties, can offer a "family pack" of sites aimed at housewives and children near schools, toy shops and supermarkets. There is a "captains of industry" pack, targeted at major commuter routes, while their "leisure pack" sells sites aimed at the young - near clubs, cinemas, pubs and other youth venues.

Posters work if they reinforce what people already partly think. That is why Double Whammy swung votes while Demon Eyes did



Polly Toynbee

None of us likes to admit that political posters swing votes; they are crass compared with the wit, irony and self-mockery of other advertising

not. Currently, 3,001 Tory posters nationwide read "New Labour New Taxes/New Job Losses" etc, featuring the blood-red tear. That, Worcester says, is the right pitch, a negative campaign against the front-runners.

Labour currently has 1,500 posters with an almost identically mendacious message: "Next Tory Tax? £10.50 a week VAT on Food. Enough is Enough." But Worcester says Labour has all but won the election so they have nothing to gain from negative campaigning. They should be offering a message of hope, a lifting of the spirits, aspirational and inspirational.

But what of Sir James's £20m? Is he spending his money in vain? No, because he has already achieved precisely what he always wanted. He has frightened the Tory party into turning xenophobically anti-European and he has tilted public opinion alarmingly. A short time ago the likes of Douglas Hurd were saying, loftily, that referendums are not the British way, but both Labour and Conservatives have eaten their words since then. Both sound distinctly more anti-European than they did a year ago. A poll for the European movement last month showed that one-third of voters now want out of Europe altogether. Like it or not, we have been bought.

Tory Euro-sceptics were able to push the leadership only because the colour of Goldsmith's money scared the life out of a party already on the verge of a nervous breakdown. Goldsmith's money has purchased Major's and Rifkind's new line that it is "very unlikely" that Britain will join the single currency. Labour, too, has been towed some way along in the Goldsmith wake.

Where, now, is the advertising campaign on the other side? British industrialists with a vital interest in a positive European policy still seem to think that it is enough to make occasional speeches to the CBI and talk to ministers behind the scenes. But politicians in this fevered atmosphere will not be moved by more British interests: they will be moved only by electoral interest. In what looks dangerously like a national stampede for the European Exit, the only way to change the politicians' minds is to persuade the people.

The captains of industry would be the best persuaders: even the third of voters who say they want to leave Europe say they wouldn't if they were persuaded that it would be against our economic interest. They are also the most ignorant, the very ones best reached by posters: the more people know about the EU, the more European they are. So now is the time for business to put money up front, fast, for a serious public campaign in support of closer ties with Europe - now, before the election. It would pull the Tories back from the brink of Euro-phobia and shift the whole tone of the debate.

The European Movement is about to start advertising, but it has a puny budget of £0.5m, 40 times less than Sir James's. So, where is your money, Bob Ayling of British Airways, Sir Ian Vallance of British Telecom, Dick Giordano of British Gas, Richard Branson of Virgin? (Answers on a poster, please.)

Andrew Whitman Smith's column will return next Monday.

You never know who you'll meet on a safari

by Rory Bremner

A Sunday spent by the river. Nothing special, you may think, except that this one has crocodiles and hippos which keep me awake at night in my tent, five yards from the water's edge.

No ordinary river, no ordinary tent, either, but one at Galdessa Camp in Kenya's Tsavo East National Park. Galdessa is one of a growing number of private camps and lodges whose development plays a leading role in the trend to combine conservation with tourism while benefiting local communities: eco-tourism. When I meet Galdessa's impossibly good-looking owner, Pierre Morgue D'Algue, and examine its list of monied and celebrity visitors, the phrase eco-tourism comes temptingly to mind, but let that pass.

Seventy per cent of Kenya's wildlife lives outside its national parks, so it makes ecological sense to encourage tourists away from the beaten track towards smaller, more remote lodges whose owners - including several former hunters - have eagerly seized on the possibilities of eco-tourism. Galdessa may be a luxurious safari camp, but its development, together with funding from the conservation charity Tusk, has led to the acquisition of 30 black rhinos in Tsavo. Richard Bonham, at Ol Donyo Was in the Chyulu Hills, and Ian Craig at Lewa Downs, are already supporting local communities through tourist revenue and environmental programmes. Without Bonham the Masai community would have no water supply; he brings it in from 30km away each day. And without the Craigs, there would be no rhino sanctuary at Lewa Downs.

My safari began where last year's ended: in Cape Town, with a sober and humiliating reminder of England's own endangered species - our cricketers. Watching South Africa roll over India at Newlands, we are greeted with the teatime announcement that in reply to Zimbabwe's 249-7, England are 27-3. The crowd explodes with derisive laughter, the sort of derision that would cause a Jeffrey Archer or a Michael Winner to shuffle in embarrassment. Is there no escape from this shame? It took a good few minutes before my friend Tim Wright had the presence of mind to point out that South Africa's success is due in no small measure to their English coach.

The arrival of Graham Cowdrey (son of Colin) brightened things considerably as Messrs Bremner and Wright immediately set about improving matters with a major bout of fielding practice on the hotel lawns. The acquisition of Marcus Berkman's brilliant book on cricket, *Rain Men*, and the resulting obsession with cricket commentators meant that within minutes we were struck with TMS-itis, where the victims develop an inability to speak except as Trevor Bailey. Thus: "erm ... rather a good ball ...", "not a bad piece of parking ...", "one of the warmer mornings ...".



After 12 hours 15 minutes the spotter whispered 'cheetah'. We set off in pursuit. After 12 hours 16 minutes we were stuck in the mud

Later that evening Graham introduced me to Lester Pigott and quickly retreated, in the style of a child ringing a doorbell and running round the corner to wait the reaction. He wasn't disappointed.

Lester, a legendary mumbler, was on great form. He completely unintelligible, having perfected a form of speech which eliminates vowels altogether, possibly for tax reasons. As he is also rather deaf, he was unable to hear most of what I could say between giggles, and the conversation fell at the first fence. The evening ended with much excitement with the news that Frankie Dettori, due to ride the next day's favourite, had a boil on his bum and couldn't take part. Word got round: Lester was keen. The racing fraternity, including Julian "scoop" Wilson, waited with bated breath to see if the great champion would

get a ride. Alas, it was not to be. And so up to Nairobi, several hours north and beyond the reach of mobile phones. Coverage in South Africa is incredibly good. Too good, in fact. In parts of the Kruger Park your mobile phone can get a signal, which has already led to some Germans excitedly ringing up friends in Frankfurt to say: "Guess what I'm looking at now? It starts with 'L' and ends with 'ion'." Good grief. This brings out the Victor Meldrew in me. It's only a matter of time before Bob Hoskins will appear on safari, in the bush, brandishing the all-new digital mobile phone and telling us, "It's good to stalk".

A bush doctor writes: "Don't throw away any cattle prods or devices for administering electrical shocks you may have left over from the Good Old Days." They've now been found to be uniquely effective for treating snake bites and bee stings. A quick few thousand volts through you apparently breaks down the protein which is the venom's key ingredient, allowing the victim a rapid recovery.

It's fair to say that at some time on your safari you will be completely terrified. You came here to get away from it all. The sound of lions hunting near your tent, or elephants, rhinos or, worst of all, hippos charging at you can rather make you wish you were back there where the only thing breathing down your neck is a deadline or a director. After about 12 hours searching for big cats in the Serengeti ("I'm sure they were here two weeks ago," said my guide, rather as if he'd misplaced his glasses), we realised that as we ate under a tree 30 miles from

anywhere on the hot, scrubby plain, a leopard had been watching us 50 yards away. After 12 hours 15 minutes the spotter whispered "Duma!" (cheetah!). We set off in pursuit. After 12 hours 16 minutes the Land Rover was stuck fast up to its axles in mud. In the baking afternoon heat. With a hyena watching. Oh my God. Which brings me to Bush Tip Number Two, ingeniously employed by my guide, Roger Corfield. Remove your spare wheel and bury it 10 yards in front of the vehicle, having attached the winch cable to it. The wheel cannot move and, with luck, encouragement, low gear and a powerful winch cable dragging you out inch by inch, you can do it.

Next, to Ngongoro crater, one of the most incredible sights on earth - a vast, dry, dusty volcanic howl many miles across. But today, as every day, it's like Sainsbury's on a Saturday morning. Within minutes you can see a rhino, two elephants, several zebra and wildebeest and about 20 Land Rovers. A sighting of a leopard can attract about six caravans of tourists craning for a view. It's like the Lake District in high summer, and another argument for more spread out, better organised eco-tourism.

At the Sopa lodge on the crater's edge, travellers' tales abound and are no surprise to the head chef, who talks nostalgically of his days at Aeroflot. Once, hearing that our chef had worked for British Airways, someone asked him if he knew where the plane was going. Nothing surprising about that, except that the person asking was the pilot. "Moscow," said our chef. "Oh," said the pilot. "We haven't got enough fuel for Moscow." The plane had to divert to a military base where the passengers were blindfolded until the plane had filled up and taken off again.

On another occasion he was summoned to the cockpit where he found the pilot struggling to get the landing gear down. Our hero calmly pointed out that planes carry a special jack which the undercarriage can be levered down. "Ah yes," said the pilot. "The problem is, yesterday I was changing the wheel on my car ...". Sure enough, he had borrowed the jack and left it at home; the resultant crash landing ploughed a neat furrow beside the runway.

And so back to England. Shril tabloid headlines, scandal, gossip and that election campaign. After a fortnight of crocodiles, hyenas and vultures it seems strangely familiar ...

Sold: a pyramid of greed and folly

Albanians are not the first to be fooled by the lure of easy money. So why did they fall for it?

For the sharks and schemers who inhabit the world of pyramid-selling, Albania was the softest touch of all.

The 40 years of darkness under the Stalinist leader Enver Hoxha gave the Albanian people little opportunity for learning the subtleties and potential pitfalls of personal finance.

The election of the country's first non-Communist leader less than five years ago has failed to produce the anticipated influx of wealth for the citizens of Europe's poorest nation, and average wages remain at a miserable £45 a month.

With the lifting of the Stalinist curtain, Albanians have been exposed to televised sights of material wealth, but given no explanation as to how it is attained. So when the pyramid-seller arrived, with promises of untold riches, he was telling a desperate people what they wanted to hear: the secret formula for earning easy money. It was a message that has also been enthusiastically received in Britain and most other parts of the world. For, if the pitch is good, pyramid-selling can be a persuasive proposition.

Subscribers are asked to pay an entry fee - £3,000 is typical in the UK - and are promised unrealistic rates of return, with the money being paid from the subscriptions of new people recruited to the venture. The rules are fairly straightforward: each new member is typically required to recruit a further six people. But for the first member to get a good return from the scheme, they will need the three levels of the pyramid beneath them to be filled. This requires the recruitment of 216 people (6 x 6 x 6).

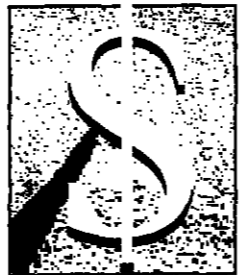
While this may not be beyond an enthusiastic pyramid salesman, the mathematics are more daunting for those who are subsequently

recruited to the scheme. For the six people on the second rung to fill the necessary three levels beneath them, each must find a further 216 people - a total of 1,296. When those 1,296 come to recruit, they will require 279,936 people. For these to get their reward, 60 million participants are required.

The problem with pyramid-selling is that the number of potential recruits is limited, meaning that those on the bottom levels have no chance of making money. Inevitably, the scheme collapses under its own weight long before the 60 million are recruited, and while those at the top of the pyramid will no doubt have made considerable gains, the vast majority of subscribers lose their money. When a scheme collapses, those who set it up, who may well have made large profits, are tempted simply to start all over again.

The activities of pyramid-salesmen in Britain have alarmed the Department of Trade and Industry, which has closed some of the larger schemes on the grounds that they are against the public interest. Alchemy UK, one of the most controversial, was wound up after taking £3m of investors' money. Participants were promised a return of £31,775 each after making 24 monthly payments of £75.

Another company, FFW, offered the Midas plan - computer-generated - and claimed to turn £140 into £600 as many times as investors liked. Some 20,000 people bought into the dream, eventually losing a total of £6m.



Ian Burrell

Last year, Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, described pyramid-selling schemes as "pernicious and evil". He said that such operations break the law when "they involve those who set up, promote, purvey and administer the scheme, in criminal offences".

Lord Woolf was speaking in the Court of Appeal as he outlawed Titan Business Club, a 10,000-strong scheme which stirred its members to ever greater recruitment activity at Revivalist-style rallies.

Earlier this month, a Private Member's Bill banning money circulation pyramid schemes finally became law. Previous legislation, passed in the Seventies, had proved ineffective against operations which had no product to sell. Instead, regulators used provisions in the Companies Act to ask the High Court to shut down pyramids, a slow process which has been used to close 18 operations in the past three years.

The Government believes that the new legislation will finally end the practice in this country. John Taylor, the consumer affairs minister, said that many pyramid operations were "no more than swindles". For their part, pyramid sellers claim they are misunderstood. One of Titan Business Club's directors complained that the company had been the victim of "extreme prejudice" by the authorities.

The degree of suspicion is not dissimilar to that once levelled at time-share holiday schemes. Like many time-share operations, pyramid sales companies often draw potential new mem-

bers to hear their carefully prepared promotional patter in a highly charged atmosphere with ranks of other would-be members. And like time-share, direct selling - as pyramid-selling is also known - has its respectable side, with reputable companies serving satisfied customers. Most of these involve sales of products such as jewellery or cosmetics, and are not limited to the simple transfer of money. Richard Berry, of the Direct Selling Association, which represents legitimate multi-level marketing companies, has publicly welcomed the clamp-down on "get-rich-quick" schemes by the British authorities.

Pyramid-selling is not new. In the Twenties, Charles Ponzi gave America the name "Ponzi Scheme" after persuading gullible Americans to part with millions of dollars. And if a scam was tried and tested in America and Britain, then it was sure to succeed in the former Communist countries, where investors were even more vulnerable to being swindled.

In Russia, 25,000 angry investors recently converged on the offices of one pyramid-seller, and in Romania the Caritas scheme collapsed having attracted an estimated \$1bn (£630m) from up to 4 million Romanians. In each case, greed was the motivating factor, just as it will be for those who buy into future pyramid-selling schemes. People will always want to believe in the dream of fast and easy money.

Those with the most unshakable belief in the dream are often those in the most desperate circumstances, and this weekend in Albania, many investors still refused to believe that they had been duped. They rioted and burned, their anger ostensibly aimed at a government whom they accuse of malpractice over the affair; but in reality they have no one to blame but themselves.

No 2 Nineteen Eighty-Four.

Nineteen Eighty-Four is the 2nd greatest book of the century, as voted for by Waterstone's customers and Channel 4 viewers. To find out which other great works make up the 100 Books of the Century and for an essential guide to 20th century literature, visit any Waterstone's bookshop. If, while you're there, you discover there are some you haven't read, from now until the end of February you can buy any four titles from the list for the price of three. For an indication of where you might like to start, try the thoughts of Germaine Greer reviewing the list in "W" magazine, available in all Waterstone's shops, priced £1.



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Second-liners come in from cold to take up the running with Footsie

An important link was re-established in the stock market last week.

For the first time since April the two major share indices were riding at peaks at the same time although they fell from grace on Friday.

The blue-chip Footsie index had tended to make the running since April's together with the supporting FTSE 250 index limping along behind. But this year the pattern has changed and second-liners have scrambled to make up lost ground.

Although Footsie has made far more dramatic progress since April, supporting shares, as well as the smaller fry representing the market's lower divisions, have looked much more positive in recent weeks.

The catch-up will come as no surprise to many observers. After all the shares of smaller companies often seem to do well at the start of the year, probably fuelled by the rush of

new year tips. If 1997 proves to be the run of the little 'uns will start peering out in the spring.

Last week's rip-roaring performance is in line with many of the forecasts from the City's army of strategists.

A strong opening, followed by a sharp dip in the summer or autumn and then a revival was the prediction heard in many quarters.

But there is also a widely held view that the market starts a year as it intends to go on. On that argument NatWest Securities' brave 4,600 Footsie forecast would appear to be in the bag.

But, of course, if nothing else the market makes its own rules. Predicting is often a hazardous exercise but when it comes to forecasting the course of equities it is frequently a fool's game.

After all very few experts get it right sufficiently frequently to be able to join mega-rich

Joseph Lewis - who made his fortune guessing the direction of the currency markets and lives in the Bahamas - and enjoy the satisfaction of splashing out £40m for 25.1 per cent of Glasgow Rangers.

Last year the market underlined its waywardness by outmanoeuvring most experts. The general prediction was a good first half followed by a poor second six months.

In the event, the first six months had their moments but most of the action came in the second half.

In the eyes of some followers, banks and financials hold the key to this year's display. They have been in the forefront of the equity charge and should they start to give up some of their gains then nasty cracks could materialise.

Robin Griffiths, experienced chartered analyst at HSBC James Capel, is one fretting about the banking role and he is prepared to bet that Footsie could sink to



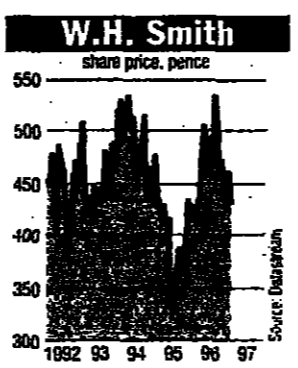
STOCK MARKET WEEK

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year

around 3,970 points. He suggests the first two weeks of next month could be the testing time.

Mr Griffiths is, however,



rather more bullish on the FTSE 250 stocks - or mid-caps as they are known.

He expects the supporting shares to throw off the shadow of Footsie and produce better performances.

Interestingly he says: "In scanning through the 250 stocks we notice many that had been in steep downturns. Many investors feel more comfortable buying bombed-out stocks for recovery, than they do in trying to hold on to the hot tail-pipes of rocket ships. Their day has now arrived."

Merrill Lynch, the US investment house, offers an off-beat guide to the market's performance. Its investors and insiders

survey flashes a strong buy signal.

Company insiders have a good record of forecasting the direction of equity markets and although straightforward investors, without the benefit of any special knowledge, are fairly neutral it appears the actions of insiders, based on director share deals, are sending out clear buy messages.

Merrill Lynch says: "Company directors have an excellent record of timing the highs and lows of their share prices. Recently they have been buying their own shares, suggesting a good outlook for corporate profits."

Another test of whether the market is overheating is the quality of new issues. The more weird and wonderful they become the more likely it is that the dreaded crack is not far away.

There is no doubt that more and more companies, which under more subdued circum-

stances would not have a cat's chance in hell of scoring a flotation success, are finding it not too difficult to tap the market for funds.

The trouble is that investors get carried away. Flushed with their success in a heady bull market they are happy to fork out for oddball shares which in the cold, hard light of a bear market would clearly be regarded as highly avoidable.

AIM and Ofex have attracted most of the fringe applicants, long on promise but decidedly short of any sign of near-term profits.

Disasters have, fortunately, been rare but when the chill winds blow the casualty rate could mount.

The only major company result due this week is WH Smith.

On Wednesday it is expected to show its recovery, directed by former Post Office chief Bill Cockburn, is contin-

uing and should produce half-year profits more than 50 per cent higher at around £38m.

The basic Smith retailing business is thought to have achieved a dramatic improvement and distribution and the Waterstone's bookshops should also have performed well.

But the Virgin/Our Price music operation is likely to have slumped into losses, probably reaching £2.5m.

In August, the famous high street name reported its first deficit in more than 200 years of trading when, with a huge raft of exceptional items, it managed a £194.7m loss.

Sean Eddie and John Richards at NatWest Securities believe that the company "has enormous leeway in what profit it declares" for the full year because of the £233.4m set aside last time for restructuring and the sale of what was regarded as non-core operations. The NatWest guess is £117m.

| UK Index | | | | | | | | | | Asian Index | | | | | | | | | | Share Price Data | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|-------------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|------------------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|--------|--|-------|--|-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| Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | | Index | | Weekly | |

| The Independent Index | Index | Change | Volume | Index | Change | Volume | |
|------------------------|----------|---------|-----------|------------------------|----------|--------|---------|
| FTSE 100 - Real-time | 4,650.00 | +100.00 | 1,200,000 | FTSE 250 - Real-time | 2,100.00 | +50.00 | 800,000 |
| UK Stock Market Report | 01 | 01 | 01 | UK Stock Market Report | 02 | 02 | 02 |
| UK Company News | 02 | 02 | 02 | UK Company News | 03 | 03 | 03 |
| Foreign Exchange | 03 | 03 | 03 | Foreign Exchange | 04 | 04 | 04 |

| Interest Rates | Rate | Change | Rate | Change | |
|-----------------|-------|--------|-----------------|--------|-------|
| UK Base Rate | 5.00% | 0.00% | UK Base Rate | 5.00% | 0.00% |
| Bank of England | 5.00% | 0.00% | Bank of England | 5.00% | 0.00% |
| Commercial Bank | 5.00% | 0.00% | Commercial Bank | 5.00% | 0.00% |
| Overnight | 5.00% | 0.00% | Overnight | 5.00% | 0.00% |

| Breweries, Pubs & Rest | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| AB InBev | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Asahi | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Beck's | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Carlsberg | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Heineken | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Kaiser | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Miller | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Orkla | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Pilsener | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| San Miguel | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Tiger | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Yokohama | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Diversified Industrials | | | | | | | | | |
| Alcoa | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Amgen | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boeing | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
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| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
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| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
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| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
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| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
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| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
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| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Boji | 100 | 100 | 100 | | | | | | |

| Oil, Integrated | Price | Change | Volume | Price | Change | Volume | |
|-----------------|-------|--------|---------|-------|--------|--------|---------|
| BP | 1.20 | +0.05 | 100,000 | BP | 1.20 | +0.05 | 100,000 |
| Shell | 1.15 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Shell | 1.15 | +0.05 | 100,000 |
| Exxon | 1.10 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Exxon | 1.10 | +0.05 | 100,000 |
| Amoco | 1.05 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amoco | 1.05 | +0.05 | 100,000 |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Oil, Integrated</p> <p>BP 1.20 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Shell 1.15 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Exxon 1.10 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Amoco 1.05 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Other Financial</p> <p>BP 1.20 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Shell 1.15 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Exxon 1.10 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Amoco 1.05 +0.05 100,000</p> | <p>Food Manufacturers</p> <p>Albert Heijn 1.10 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Albert Heijn 1.10 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Albert Heijn 1.10 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Albert Heijn 1.10 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Albert Heijn 1.10 +0.05 100,000</p> | <p>Electronics</p> <p>Amoco 1.05 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Amoco 1.05 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Amoco 1.05 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Amoco 1.05 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Amoco 1.05 +0.05 100,000</p> |
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| <p>Telecommunications</p> <p>BT 1.20 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 1.15 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 1.10 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 1.05 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 1.00 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.95 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.90 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.85 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.80 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.75 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.70 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.65 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.60 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.55 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.50 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.45 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.40 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.35 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.30 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.25 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.20 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.15 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.10 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.05 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.00 +0.05 100,000</p> | <p>for 24 hour telephone banking</p> <p>0800 24 24 24</p> <p>For full written details of our services write to First Direct, Freeport, Leeds, LS98 1PD. First Direct is a division of Midland Bank plc. First Direct reserves the right to decline to open an account for you. Calls may be monitored and recorded. American Express must be used.</p> <p>Member HSBC © Green</p> | <p>Telecommunications</p> <p>BT 1.20 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 1.15 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 1.10 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 1.05 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 1.00 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.95 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.90 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.85 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.80 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.75 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.70 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.65 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.60 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.55 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.50 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.45 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.40 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.35 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.30 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.25 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.20 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.15 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.10 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.05 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>Telecom 0.00 +0.05 100,000</p> | <p>Retailers, Food</p> <p>ASDA 1.20 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 1.15 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 1.10 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 1.05 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 1.00 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.95 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.90 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.85 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.80 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.75 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.70 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.65 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.60 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.55 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.50 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.45 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.40 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.35 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.30 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.25 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.20 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.15 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.10 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.05 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.00 +0.05 100,000</p> | <p>Textiles & Apparel</p> <p>ASDA 1.20 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 1.15 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 1.10 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 1.05 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 1.00 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.95 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.90 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.85 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.80 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.75 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.70 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.65 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.60 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.55 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.50 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.45 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.40 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.35 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.30 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.25 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.20 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.15 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.10 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.05 +0.05 100,000</p> <p>ASDA 0.00 +0.05 100,000</p> |
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| Retailers, Food | Price | Change | Volume | Price | Change | Volume | |
|-----------------|-------|--------|---------|-------|--------|--------|---------|
| ASDA | 1.20 | +0.05 | 100,000 | ASDA | 1.20 | +0.05 | 100,000 |
| ASDA | 1.15 | +0.05 | 100,000 | ASDA | 1.15 | +0.05 | 100,000 |
| ASDA | 1.10 | +0.05 | 100,000 | ASDA | 1.10 | +0.05 | 100,000 |
| ASDA | 1.05 | +0.05 | 100,000 | ASDA | 1.05 | +0.05 | 100,000 |

| Retailers, General | Price | Change | Volume | Price | Change | Volume | |
|--------------------|-------|--------|---------|-------|--------|--------|---------|
| ASDA | 1.20 | +0.05 | 100,000 | ASDA | 1.20 | +0.05 | 100,000 |
| ASDA | 1.15 | +0.05 | 100,000 | ASDA | 1.15 | +0.05 | 100,000 |
| ASDA | 1.10 | +0.05 | 100,000 | ASDA | 1.10 | +0.05 | 100,000 |
| ASDA | 1.05 | +0.05 | 100,000 | ASDA | 1.05 | +0.05 | 100,000 |

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| Printing & Paper | Price | Change | Volume | Price | Change | Volume | |
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| ASDA | 1.20 | +0.05 | 100,000 | ASDA | 1.20 | +0.05 | 100,000 |
| ASDA | 1.15 | +0.05 | 100,000 | ASDA | 1.15 | +0.05 | 100,000 |
| ASDA | 1.10 | +0.05 | 100,000 | ASDA | 1.10 | +0.05 | 100,000 |
| ASDA | 1.05 | +0.05 | 100,000 | ASDA | 1.05 | +0.05 | 100,000 |

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| Insurance | | | | | | | | | | Life | | | | | | | | | | Bonds | | | | | | | | | | Media | | | | | | | | | | Support Services | | | | | | | | | |
| Company | Price | Change | Volume | Company | Price | Change | Volume | Company | Price | Change | Volume | Company | Price | Change | Volume | Company | Price | Change | Volume | Company | Price | Change | Volume | Company | Price | Change | Volume | Company | Price | Change | Volume | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Amstar | 1.20 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.20 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.20 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.20 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.20 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.20 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.20 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.20 | +0.05 | 100,000 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Amstar | 1.15 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.15 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.15 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.15 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.15 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.15 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.15 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.15 | +0.05 | 100,000 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Amstar | 1.10 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.10 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.10 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.10 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.10 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.10 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.10 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.10 | +0.05 | 100,000 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Amstar | 1.05 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.05 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.05 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.05 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.05 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.05 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.05 | +0.05 | 100,000 | Amstar | 1.05 | +0.05 | 100,000 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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science

Litmus test for the loathed

A general election will decide the fate of an unpopular science policy, says Charles Arthur

Prestige. Status. National pride. Those are the sort of words that a vote-eager defence secretary might use when announcing (to pluck an example from the air) a new royal yacht: but they're also, you would hope, the sort of considerations that would go into deciding the fate of the nation's publicly held scientific expertise. You can be sure, though, that the fate of the latter will not reap the same headlines when it is announced in Parliament in the next fortnight or so.

Yet it will, arguably, affect more people – specifically, thousands of scientists and staff at Government-owned research laboratories up and down the country.

The expected announcement will be the next stage of the Government's Prior Options policy, which aims to see whether there are better ways of managing various laboratories currently funded by the public sector. Those laboratories cover a huge range of expertise – the Royal Observatories, fisheries research, buildings research, a broad range of animal and veterinary research, the Public Health Laboratory Service, and others – employing more than 20,000 people.

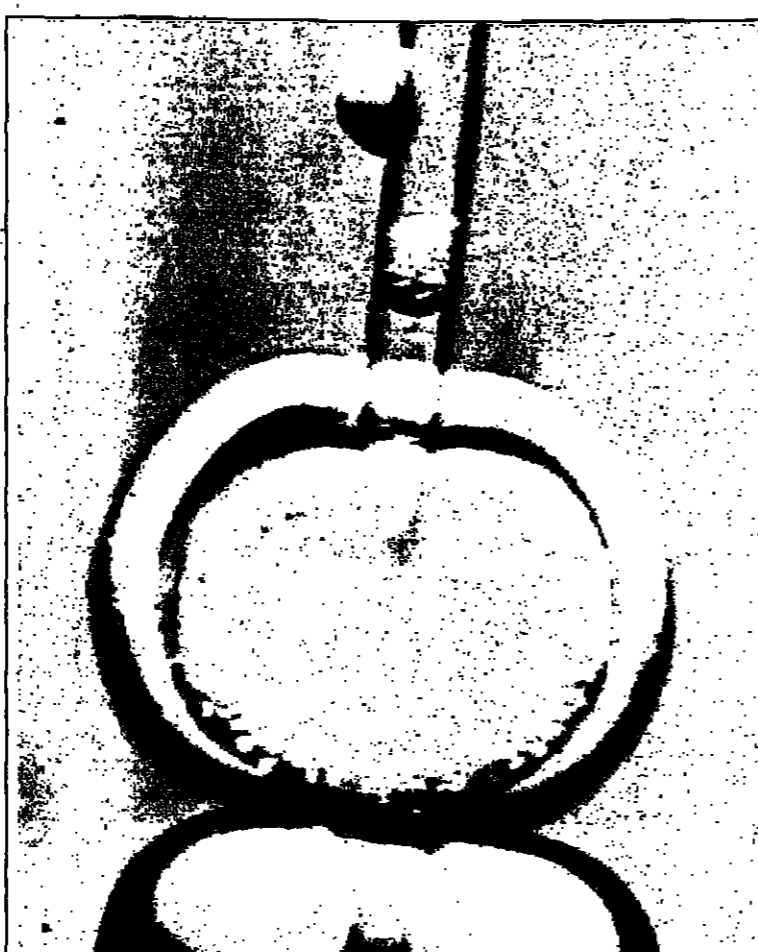
There's a fair chance that the decision will be more popular than last week's one about That Yacht – particularly if the decision is effectively no decision, in the form of a postponement. That would push any real action beyond the date of the general election. If the Labour Party wins that, it has already pledged not to continue with the programme.

But even if no more laboratories are moved immediately out of the public sector, figures collated by the Labour Party show that the cost of the review is already at least £4.3m, including £2m spent preparing the Royal Observatories for privatisation before the idea was abandoned late last year.

Adam Ingram, the shadow minister for science and technology, notes that the real cost may be higher: much of the review work has been done by full-time staff at the centres, whose time is not clocked in the same way as that of a consultant investigating it.

"There are also the pension costs of doing this, but those are unquantifiable," he said after collating the figures last week. "These are just the costs of getting ready to do it. But given the imminence of the general election, and the importance of PSREs (public sector research establishments), I think this issue would be better considered after the election."

The name of the scheme refers to the checklist against which a laboratory should, by the ideology, have been



Cloning of cells and sheep at Edinburgh's Roslin Institute, a laboratory considered for privatisation. Photographs: Science Photo Library/Claire Aron

checked before continuing as part of the public sector. The options are to abolish it, privatise it or contract it out. (Management buy-outs are allowed, though not bids by the research councils which operate the laboratories.)

For a government that seems to thrive on unpopularity, the Prior Options scheme is ideal compost to heap upon the heads of those in the public sector. It really is hard to find anyone with a good word to say for it, aside from the ministers at the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). Even the DTI press office wasn't able last week to find a figure for the savings produced since the first sell-offs were announced, with the sale of the Transport Research Laboratory and the Laboratory of the Government Chemist last April. The latter wasn't exactly profit-making: the buyer paid £360,000 but the DTI handed over almost £2m to relieve the Government of liabilities linked to disentangling it from the National Physical Laboratory at Teddington, which handles various physical standards.

(That was handed over to private management in July 1995.)

By contrast, it's hard to pick up a science paper without coming across someone who is unhappy about Prior Options. Last year the Royal Society issued a statement criticising the scheme on four key points, notably that "care is needed to ensure that Prior Options does not damage the highly successful collaboration that has built up between universities and research council institutes, and that repeated reviews questioning the continued existence of public sector research establishments... [might] adversely affect efficiency and productivity."

Nor does the scheme have a fan in Derek Roberts, a former GEC manager who is now provost of University College, London, and president this year of the British Association. He, like many critics, objects that the principle of selling off national expertise and putting it into the private sector doesn't allow for the swings and roundabouts of the economic cycle.

"If you privatise something and sell it off," he says, "then by definition it will go through bad periods without particular hazards, when nothing much needs investigating. The whole thing could be reduced in scale, or closed. Then, three weeks later, we have a disaster and need it again, at full strength or more."

Examples are not hard to think of: the BSE crisis (and last March's announcement of a putative link with the human disease CJD), and the *E. coli* outbreak in Scotland, come to mind.

The independence of such research establishments is also important. John Mulvey, of the pressure group Save British Science, comments: "Their independence and disinterestedness must be beyond question. But in the private sector that's not the case. We have seen how tobacco companies have suppressed research they funded but whose results they haven't liked."

The Buildings Research Establishment (BRE) is the next in line to be privatised. Isn't it surprising to find Professor Roberts leading one of the two

bidders left in last week's race for it?

Not so, he replies. "I think most of the disposals are bad. But we have created a trust with about 100 companies in the construction industry because we believe that this way, training and research expertise will be retained in the BRE." The individual companies can also feel confident that any research is impartial.

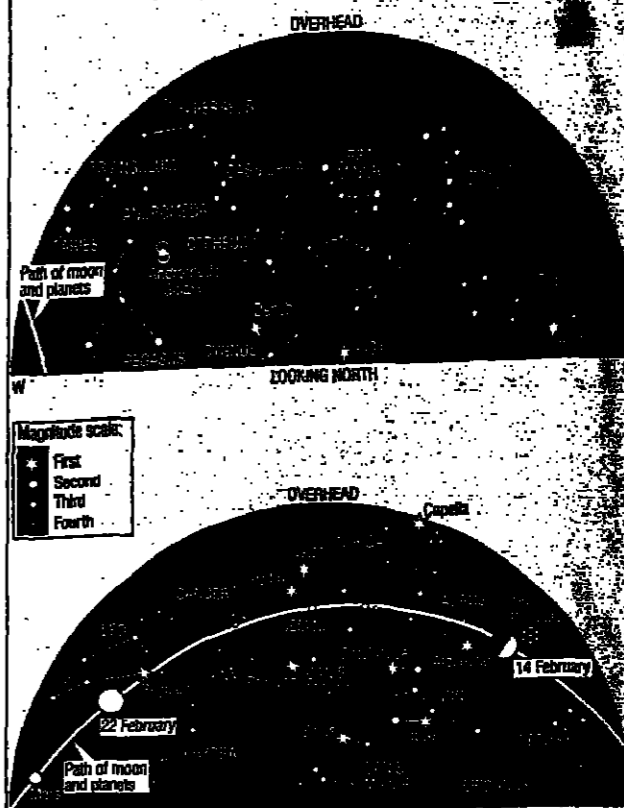
"The maximum exposure is £1, which I provided out of my pocket. The idea isn't to take risks – banks can take risks. It's a stupid policy, but if that's the policy then that's what we have to do."

All the same, he says, "The whole thing is being pursued on a ridiculous timescale." His consortium's bid went in last Monday, with the choice due last Friday. (The other bidder is a management buy-out backed by the venture capital firm 3i.) "The final disposal terms will be negotiated by the end of February, which is ludicrous."

Not that anyone said government policies had to make sense – except when there's an election looming.

The stars at night

The sky as it will appear in mid-February at 10pm



There is a hint of a new season in the night sky this month, with the appearance of Leo, the most prominent constellation of spring, in the east. It will move to centre stage high in the south during March and April.

Another return graces the skies this February. Until May, we'll be hearing in greater detail about Comet Hale-Bopp, an unexpected celestial apparition which may be the most spectacular comet for almost a century.

This ball of ice and rock is brightening as it closes in on the Sun, boiling off its ices ever more fiercely. Look to the east in the pre-dawn skies for a first sighting, but don't worry too much if you're not an early riser – the best is yet to come. The comet will be brightest in late March and early April.

This month, early-evening skies are dominated by the brilliant stars of winter. Look south for mighty Orion, with seven bright stars framing his shoulders and belt. To the upper right is his ancient adversary, Taurus the bull.

The evening sky is also sporting two planets. Saturn is glowing in the south west after sunset. It sets at 8.30pm; simultaneously, orange-red Mars is rising in the east. Two American probes – Mars Global Surveyor and Mars Pathfinder – are on their way to the red planet for a rendezvous in the summer and early autumn. Designed long before last summer's Martian life controversy, they will be seeking out water on the planet.

Saturn, meantime, is the target of a much more drawn-out space mission. The US probe Cassini will be launched in October on a journey to the vast ring world which will take seven years. The main Cassini craft will release the European Space Agency's Huygens craft, which will land on Titan, the planet's biggest moon. This mysterious world is wreathed in a thick orange atmosphere, under which may lurk molecules that could form life in warmer conditions.

February diary
7 3.06pm new moon
14 8.57am Moon at first quarter
22 10.27am full moon

Heather Couper and Nigel Henbest

theoretically ...

Tumours need blood, so if you cut off their blood supply, they should die, shouldn't they? That's the thinking being pursued by a team at Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas. They treated solid tumours in mice with an antibody intended to promote blood clotting in those cells, when given intravenously, the therapy resulted in complete tumour regressions in 38 per cent of the cancerous mice. The strategy can't be used immediately in humans, though, because suitable antibodies for tumour blood vessels haven't yet been identified.

If you have a tense, nervous headache, don't blame mechanical tension. That's what helps to hold your neurons together and allowed your cerebral cortex to fold so thoroughly. That's the suggestion (at least, the bit about the tension) from David Van Essen at Washington University, Missouri, who in last week's edition of *Nature* suggests that the mechanical

tension along parallel fibres in the cortex can explain why the average cerebral cortex is so highly folded that it has a surface area of about 1,600 square centimetres – three times what it would be without any convolutions.

Why scream while you're being eaten by a tiger? Maybe it is the sort of question only scientists would ask, but it's particularly the kind that puzzles behavioural ecologists. Is it to warn other potential victims away? Or to attract help? A new experiment with pike and minnows (the former eats the latter) by a Canadian team found a third reason: you might attract another predator which would fight the first one for you, the trophy – giving you the chance to slip away. Worth bearing in mind if you're an explorer ...

The smell of garlic on somebody's breath doesn't come directly from the plant itself, but from chemical changes in the blood, according to a team from the University of Innsbruck in Austria. Three

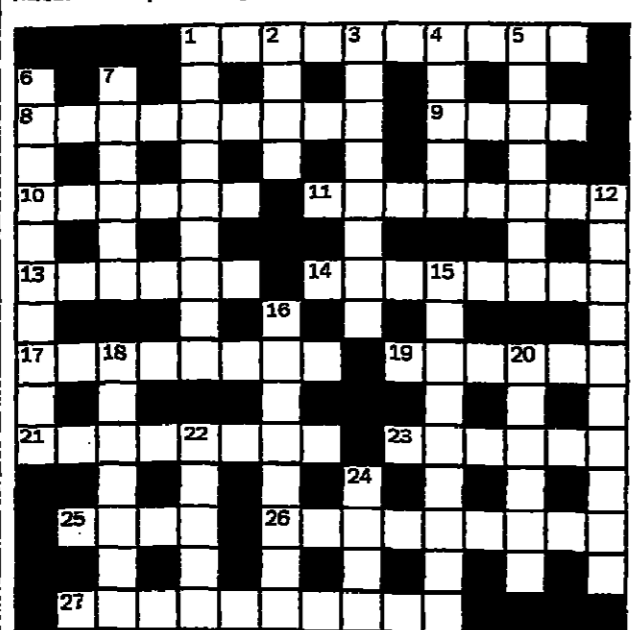
compounds – allyl methyl sulphide, dimethyl sulphide and acetone – took some hours to reach their peak level in blood, and were still present 30 hours later. But acetone is produced by degradation of fatty compounds in the blood, including cholesterol, and its concentration in subjects' breath was higher than that from crushed garlic.

Hawaii, California and Florida have the most endangered species, according to a new map of biodiversity in the US, drawn up by a team from Princeton University. The map shows "hot spots" where unusually large numbers of endangered species are found: unsurprisingly, these tend to overlap with intensive urbanisation and agriculture. Such species also tend to be "endemic" (restricted in their ability to shift to new sites) and so are prone to extinction. Knowing where the hot spots are can help save species, because a large proportion of endangered species can be protected on a small proportion of land, say the authors.

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3206, Monday 27 January

By Fortia



- ACROSS**
- Match reference number (2-8)
 - Breaking party-line leads to reciprocal action (9)
 - Don't start Hungarian wine – all right (4)
 - Go along with scheduled attack (4,2)
 - Avoid Pole despite arrangement (8)
 - Suppose former favourite's hiding note (6)
 - Be right about one Renaissance sculptor (8)
 - Actor's public hearing (8)
 - Runner's worry about money being on time (6)
 - Play's a piece by English comic writer (4,4)
 - Unprincipled American male's spoken at last (6)
 - Fret over never-ending drill (4)
 - Plan one now strains say (9)
 - Being fit and attractive looking (10)

DOWN

- Feel concern about scroll-like ornament (9)
- The Italian's absorbed by exceptionally large paintings (4)
- Suddenly understand when you see it (8)
- Loop round inside bouquet (5)
- Vehicle's part of contract order (7)
- Drink too much old wine and turn in (3,3,4)
- Incite prison in rebellion (4,2)
- Very close detail isn't filled in (10)
- Fashionable society, French style (4,5)
- Reason for happening (8)
- When one smiles it gives a false impression (7)
- Pass from number one forward on the outside (6)
- They are entitled to services we hear (5)
- Knife sticks upside-down (4)

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